

PART NINE  
NINEPENCE

Complete in about 40 Parts

# THE GREAT WAR . . . I WAS THERE!

UNDYING MEMORIES OF 1914-1918

Edited by

**SIR JOHN  
HAMMERTON**

Editor of

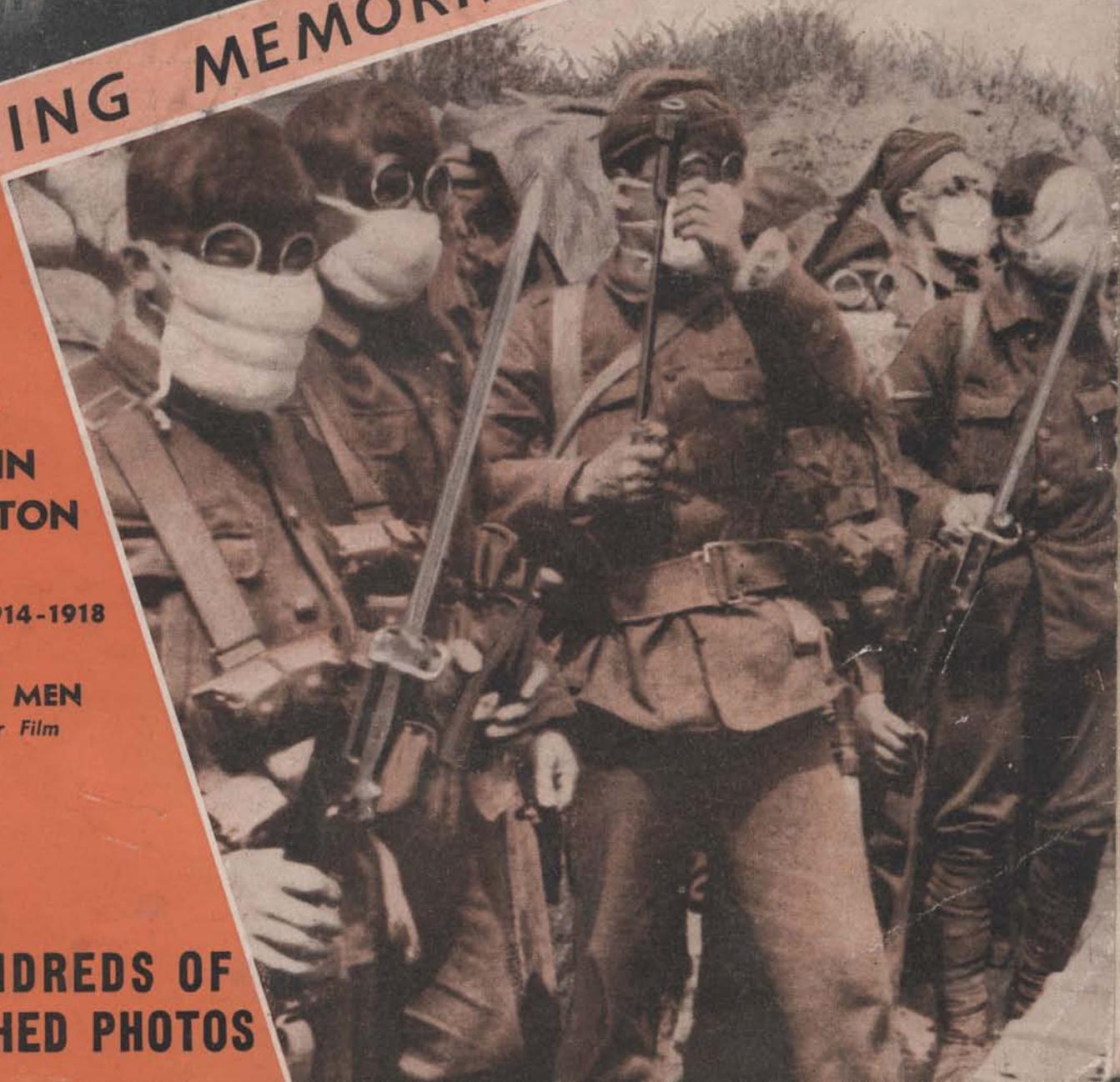
**WORLD WAR 1914-1918**

Writer of

**FORGOTTEN MEN**

*The Famous War Film*

MANY HUNDREDS OF  
UNPUBLISHED PHOTOS



## LITERARY CONTENTS OF THIS PART With Acknowledgements to Authors and Publishers

WEEK by week we acknowledge here our indebtedness to the many authors and publishers without whose courteous permission to reprint selected pages from the books written and published by them the compilation of the present work could not have been achieved. In our volumes as finally bound these acknowledgements will be repeated in the preliminary pages.

65. HEROIC FIASCO OF 'Y' BEACH  
from GEN. SIR IAN HAMILTON'S "Gallipoli Diary,"  
by his permission  
Publishers: *Edw. Arnold & Co., 41, Maddox Street, W.1*

66. WHEN OUR DEAD CLOGGED OUR TRENCHES  
from "ANZAC'S" "The Anzac Trail"  
Publishers: *William Heinemann, Ltd., London*

67. A POËT ENCOUNTERS TRAGEDY  
from COL. JOHN McCRAE'S "IN FLANDERS FIELDS," by permission of The Ryerson Press, Toronto  
Publishers: *Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., 20, Warwick Sq. E.C.*

68. CANADIAN COURAGE AND SELF-SACRIFICE  
from SIR MAX AITKEN'S (Lord Beaverbrook's) "Canada in Flanders," by permission of Lord Beaverbrook  
Publishers: *Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., 20, Warwick Sq. E.C.*

69. I SAW THE AGONY OF THE FIRST GAS ATTACK  
by ANTHONY R. HOSSACK, from "Everyman At War"  
Publishers: *J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 10, Bedford Street, W.C.2*

70. RETREATING ON YPRES THE DEAD—the Secret Gun In the Night  
from STANLEY CASSON'S "Steady Drummer"  
Publishers: *G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., 6, Portugal Street, W.C.2*

71. I WENT DOWN WITH THE LUSITANIA  
from VISCOUNTESS RHONDDA'S "This Was My World," by permission of Viscountess Rhondda  
Publishers: *Macmillan & Co., Ltd., St. Martin's Street, W.C.2*

## Leaves from the Editor's Note-Book

John Carpenter House, London, E.C.4

**F**LOODS of correspondence, all appreciative and some of it also interrogative, continue to reach me, and, though it necessarily involves a good deal of extra work, I am most pleased and delighted to receive this continuous stream of letters. It shows more clearly even than our publisher's figures of circulation how vital is the success of my new work in appealing to the lifelong interest which all ex-service men possess in those four momentous years.

**O**NE of the things that gives me most real satisfaction is the large number of old soldiers who write and tell me something of their part in the greatest of great wars. It is natural, of course, that they should hope to see something either of their own experiences or some direct association with them in our pages; but I am sure they will understand that a work of the highly selective nature of THE GREAT WAR: I WAS THERE! must maintain the highest possible standard of interest and presentation, and this, combined with a necessarily limited space, means that there is a somewhat fierce competition for entry into our pages. So, as in all competitions, some must be disappointed.

**I**N this Note-Book I am including from time to time quotations and comments from as many letters of general interest as possible, and in this way many of my readers will be able both to see some note made of their Great War associations and also, very probably, to make some form of contact with comrades of the war. Among these letters are a number from readers who find that they have a direct connexion of some sort or another with chapters which appear in our pages. Either they took part in the action or incident described or they belonged to the same unit and knew officers or men who are mentioned in our pages. There

is a natural pride in service in the Great War which is revivified with a genuine pleasure when one finds some personal association in the field of battle. Mr. D. A. Johnson, of Stratford, has specifically asked me, as a member of the 21st Division who would like to meet some of his old mates in our pages, to devote a corner of this page to a kind of "We Meet Again" column. He feels that there must be thousands who would like to hear of Old Comrades or to renew old wartime friendships. I think the suggestion is a good one, and if a sufficient number of my readers agree, as I think they will, we shall start in this page in Part 15, or perhaps earlier, an "Old Comrades' Corner." Entries in it must, of necessity, be very brief, and confined to three- or four-line statements giving name, unit, regimental number and, if desired, present address. Addresses will not be given unless the writer states that he wishes to hear direct from Old Comrades.

**I**HAVE already, in fact, one or two letters that will qualify for mention in this corner. Pte. R. Smith, of the 3rd Battalion Coldstream Guards, commenting on the photograph in page 4, Part 1, of I WAS THERE, which shows some of the veterans at Roehampton, says that he was the first man to leave Roehampton with an artificial leg. Twice wounded, in September and December 1914, his leg was removed in hospital December 16, 1914, and in August of the following year he was sent to Roehampton, where he was fitted with an American wooden leg weighing 9½ lb. Within a month he left Roehampton for home and, according to some photographs he sends me, was able to walk as naturally as any unwounded man.

**M** R. CARTER, who to our mutual satisfaction discovered himself as the young sentry at Mons in Part 1, writes to me again, after having read Part 2, saying that he "can see these books are going to be unique among war works, inasmuch as the

*[Continued in page iii of this wrapper]*



L.N.A.

**A CLOSE SHAVE FOR A POILU**

Men of Britain's New Armies were mostly clean-shaven, for Tommy would have his shave even under the utmost difficulties. Here two British soldiers are removing the beard from a French comrade, one to lather and one to shave. Many men of the French Army let their beards grow, and the French word "poilu" means "hairy." This man, though he sacrifices his beard, still retains the military moustache which justifies his honourable designation.



### **SHRAPNEL GULLY OF SINISTER MEMORIES**

A feature of the Gallipoli landscape was its numerous gullies. Shrapnel Gully, seen in this remarkable and little known photograph, was one of the wildest and ran between two hills covered with scrub. It was a famous spot on the Peninsula for the sheltering of reserves, but the Turks knew this, and it derived its ominous name from the frequent shelling to which it was subjected. At the head of it was "Quinn's Post," which, as "Anzac" states in Chapter 66, formed the key to the whole position.

*Central Press*

penetrated inland. By Sedd el Bahr, where we hove to about 6.45, the light was very baffling; land wrapped in haze, sun full in our eyes. Here we watched as best we could over the fight being put up by the Turks against our forlorn hope on the River Clyde. Very soon it became clear that we were being held. Through our glasses we could quite clearly watch the sea being whipped up all along the beach and about the River Clyde by a pelting storm of rifle bullets.

**W**e could see also how a number of our dare-devils were up to their necks in this tormented water trying to struggle on to land from the barges linking the River Clyde to the shore. There was a line of men lying flat down under cover of a little sandbank in the centre of the beach. They were so held under by fire they dared not, evidently, stir. Watching these gallant souls from the safety of a battleship gave me a hateful feeling; Roger Keyes said to me he simply could not bear it. Often a commander may have to watch tragedies from a post of safety. That is all right. I have had my share of the hair's-breadth business and now it becomes the turn of the youngsters. But, from the battleship, you are outside the frame of the picture. The thing becomes monstrous; too cold-blooded; like looking on at gladiators from the dress circle.

#### GUNS AND RIFLES NEVER CEASED

**S**o soon as we saw that none of our men had made their way farther than a few feet above sea level, the Queen [Elizabeth] opened a heavy fire from her 6-inch batteries upon the Castle, the village and the high steep ground ringing round the beach in a semicircle. The enemy lay low. At times the River Clyde signalled that the worst fire came from the old Fort and Sedd el Bahr; at times that these bullets were pouring out from about the second highest rung of seats on the west of that amphitheatre in which we were striving to take our places. Ashore, the machine-guns and rifles never ceased—tic, tac, tic, tac, brrrr—tic, tac, tic, tac, brrrrrr . . . drowned every few seconds by our tremendous salvos, this more nervous noise kept creeping back insistently into our ears.

When we saw our "covering party" hung up between the Castle and the deep sea, we had to issue fresh orders to the main body. Useless to throw them ashore to increase the number of targets on the beach. Roger Keyes started the notion that these troops might well be diverted to "Y," where

they could land unopposed, and whence, by threatening the Turkish line of retreat, they might help their advance guard at "V" more effectively than by direct reinforcement. The suggestion seemed simple common sense. If it did not suit Hunter-Weston's book [General Sir Aylmer Hunter-Weston, commanding the 29th Division] he had only to say so. Certainly he was in closer touch with all these landings than we were; it was not for me to force his hands—there was no question of that; so at 9.15 I wirelessed as follows:

"G.O.C. in C. to G.O.C. Euryalus.

"Would you like to get some more men ashore on 'Y' beach? If so, trawlers are available."

Three-quarters of an hour passed; the state of affairs at Sedd el Bahr was no better, and in an attack if you don't get better you get worse; the supports were not being landed; no answer had come to hand. So I repeated my signal to Hunter-Weston, making it this time personal from me to him and ordering him to acknowledge receipt (Lord Bobs' wrinkle):

"General Hamilton to General Hunter-Weston, Euryalus.

"Do you want any more men landed at 'Y'? There are trawlers available. Acknowledge the signal."

At 11 a.m. I got this answer:

"From General Hunter-Weston to G.O.C., Queen Elizabeth.

"Admiral Wemyss and Principal Naval Transport Officer state that to interfere with present arrangements and try to land men at 'Y' Beach would delay disembarkation."

H.M.S. Cornwallis ought to have been back from Morto Bay long ago. All sorts of surmises. Now we hear she has landed our right flank attack very dashingly, and that we have stormed de Tott's Battery. How I wish we had left "V" Beach severely alone! Big flanking attacks at "Y" and "S" might have converged on Sedd el Bahr and carried it from the rear, when none of the garrison could have escaped.

#### TURKS WERE DECEIVED

**B**UT then, until we tried, we were afraid fire from Asia might defeat the de Tott's Battery attack, and that the "Y" party might not scale the cliffs. I should doubt if the Turks are in any great force; quite clearly the bulk of them have been led astray by our feints and false rumours.

About noon, a naval officer (Lieutenant Smith), a fine fellow, came off to get some more small arm ammunition for the machine-guns on the River Clyde. He said the state of things on and around that ship was "awful": spoken by a youth now on his mettle to speak with calm, one felt he meant



**CAPTAIN OF THE RIVER CLYDE**

During the "forlorn hope of the River Clyde," as Sir Ian Hamilton calls it, Commander Edward Unwin was her captain and was awarded the V.C. for his heroic exertions during the landing. He is here seen later on when he was Beach Master at Suvla.

*Imperial War Museum*

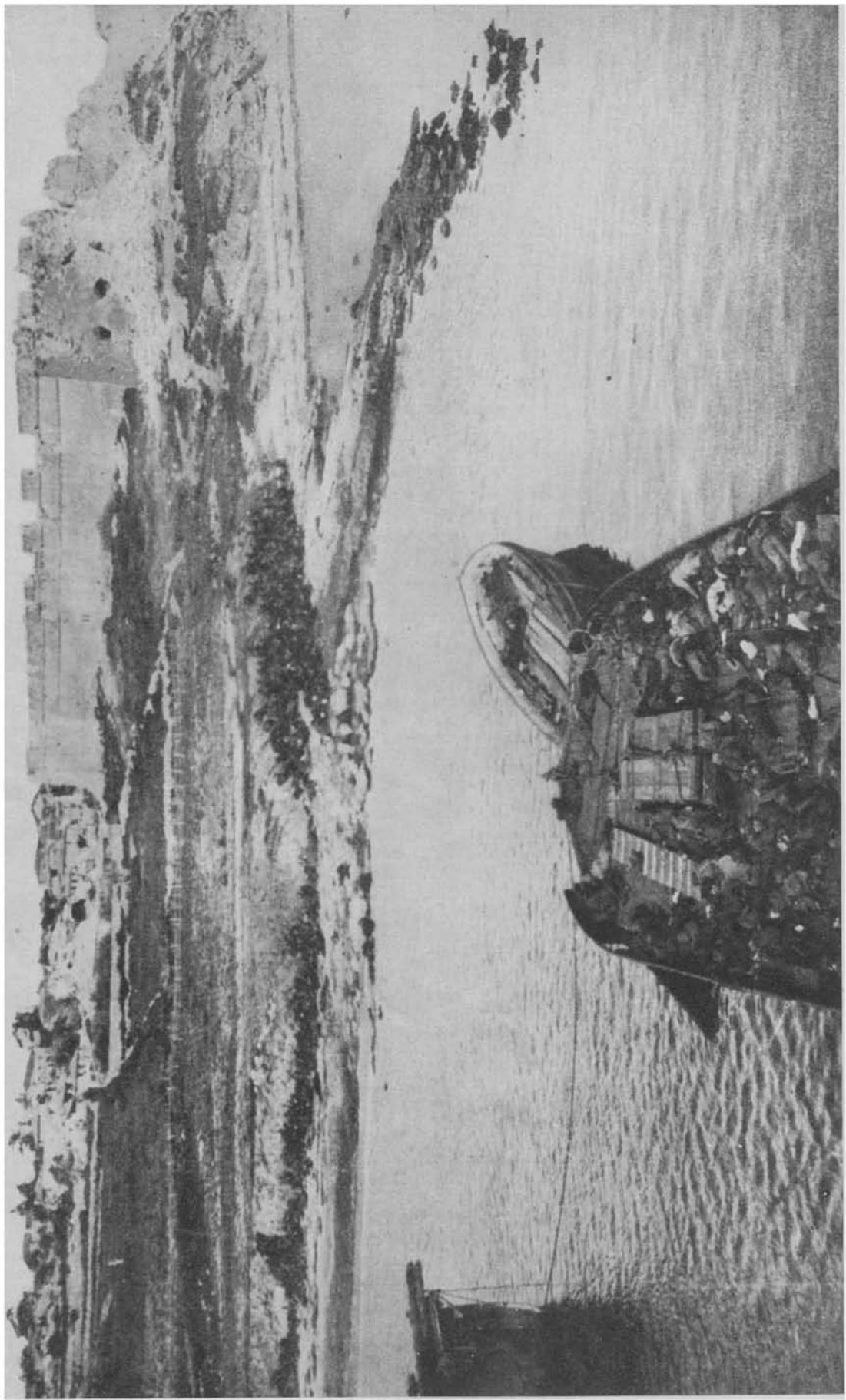
"bloody." The whole landing-place at "V" Beach is ringed round with fire.

The shots from our naval guns, smashing as their impact appears, might as well be confetti for all the effect they have upon the trenches.

The River Clyde is commanded and swept by rifles at 100 yards' range. Her own double battery of machine-guns, mounted in a sandbag revetment in her bows, is preventing the enemy from actually rushing the little party of our men crouching behind the sandbank, but the sea at Sedd el Bahr has turned red.

**A**t 1.30 heard that d'Amade [the French commander] holds Kum Kale. De Robeck had already heard independently by wireless that the French (the 6th Colonials under Nogués) had carried the village by a bayonet charge at 9.35 a.m. On the Asiatic side, then, all's well. The Russian Askold and the Jeanne d'Arc are supporting our Allies in their attack. Have told d'Amade that he will not be able to disembark at "V" as arranged, but that he will have to take his troops round to "W" and march them across.

At two o'clock a large number of our wounded who had taken refuge under the base of the arches of the old fort at Sedd el Bahr began to signal for help. The Queen Elizabeth sent away a picket boat which passed through the bullet



Imperial War Museum

**“V” BEACH HEROES AS THEIR OWN COMRADES SAW THEM**

Superb heroism and stark tragedy will be ever linked with Gallipoli, where in 1915 British troops fought with superhuman courage against most frightful odds. How they struggled through murderous and almost ceaseless fire to make a landing on “V” beach as a preliminary to an onslaught on the Turks is told in this chapter by General Sir Ian Hamilton. To his graphic words an added vividness is given by this remarkable photograph, taken from the River Clyde, which shows a party of Dublin Fusiliers on the shore sheltering behind a sandbank while aboard the lighter in the foreground in the foreground the hapless dead and dying lie. In the background is seen the fortress of Sedd el Bahr

storm and most gallantly brought off the best part of them.

Soon after two o'clock we were cheered by sighting our own brave fellows making a push from the direction of "W." We reckon they must be Worcesters and Essex men, moving up to support the Royal Fusiliers and the Lancashire Fusiliers. The new lot came along by rushes from the westwards, and we prayed God very fervently they might be able to press on, so as to strike the right rear of the enemy troops encircling "V" Beach. At 3.10 the leading heroes—we were amazed at their daring—actually stood up, in order the better to cut through a broad belt of wire entanglement. One by one, the men passed through and fought their way to within a few yards of a redoubt dominating the hill between Beaches "W" and "V."

This belt of wire ran perpendicularly, not parallel, to the coastline, and had evidently been fixed up precisely to prevent what we were now about to attempt.

**To watch V.C.'s being won by wire-cutting, to see the very figure and attitude of the hero, to be safe oneself except from the off-chance of a shell, was like being stretched upon the rack! All day we hung *vis-à-vis* this inferno.**

With so great loss and with so desperate a situation, the white flag would have gone up in the South African War. But there was no idea of it today, and I don't feel afraid of it even now, in the dark of a moonless night, where evil thoughts are given most power over the mind.

#### I WAS LOADED WITH ANXIETY

NOR does Hunter-Weston. As we were snatching a hurried meal, he came on board. After he had told us his story, breathlessly and listened to with breathless interest, I asked him what about our troops at "Y"? He thought they were now in touch with our troops at "X," but that they had been through some hard fighting. His last message had been that they were being hard-pressed, but as he had heard nothing more since then, he assumed they were all right.

To sum up: the French have dealt a brilliant stroke at Kum Kale; we have fixed a grip on the hills to the north of Gaba Tepe; also, we have broken through the enemy's defences at "X" and "W," two out of the three beaches at the south point of the Peninsula. The "hold-up" at the third, "V" (or Sedd el Bahr), is bad—it would never do if we were forced to re-embark at night as has been suggested. The background of my mind is loaded with

anxiety lest help should reach the enemy before we have done with Sedd el Bahr. The enveloping attacks on both enemy flanks have started brilliantly, but have not yet cut the enemy's line of retreat. At "S" (Morto Bay) the 2nd South Wales Borderers have landed under fire from big fortress artillery, as well as field guns and musketry. On shore they deployed and, helped by sailors from the Cornwallis, have stormed the Turkish trenches.

They are now dug in on a commanding spur, but say they do not feel strong enough to advance. From "Y," opposite Krithia, there is no further news. But two good battalions at large and on the war-path some four or five miles in rear of the enemy should do something during the next few hours.

#### THE FINEST SOLDIERS OF ALL

**W**HATEVER else may happen we have proved there are no other soldiers quite of the calibre of ours. They have *esprit de corps*; they are volunteers every one of them; they are for it; our officers—our rank and file—have been so *entered* to this attack that they will all die—that we will all die—sooner than give way before the Turk. The men are not fighting blindly as in South Africa, they are not fighting against forces with whose motives they half-sympathize. They have been told, and told again, exactly everything.

They understand. They *know* that the war can only be brought to an end by our joining hands quickly with the Russians; they *know* that the fate of the Empire depends on the courage they display. Should the Fates so decree, the whole brave army may disappear during the night more dreadfully than that of Sennacherib; but assuredly they will not surrender. Where so much is dark, where many are discouraged, in this knowledge I feel both light and joy.

**A**s night began to settle down over the land, Queen Elizabeth seemed to feel the time had come to give full vent to her wrath. An order from the bridge, and, in the twinkling of an eye, she shook from stem to stern. The great ship is fighting all out, all in action. Every gun spouted flame and a roar goes up fit to shiver the stars of Heaven. Ears stopped with wax; eyes half-blinded by the scorching yellow blasts; still, in some chance seconds' interval we could hear the hive-like brr-rr-rr-rr-rr-r-r-r-r of the small arms playing on the shore; still see, through some break in the acrid smoke, the profile of the Castle and houses. Nay, of the very earth itself and the rocky cliff. See

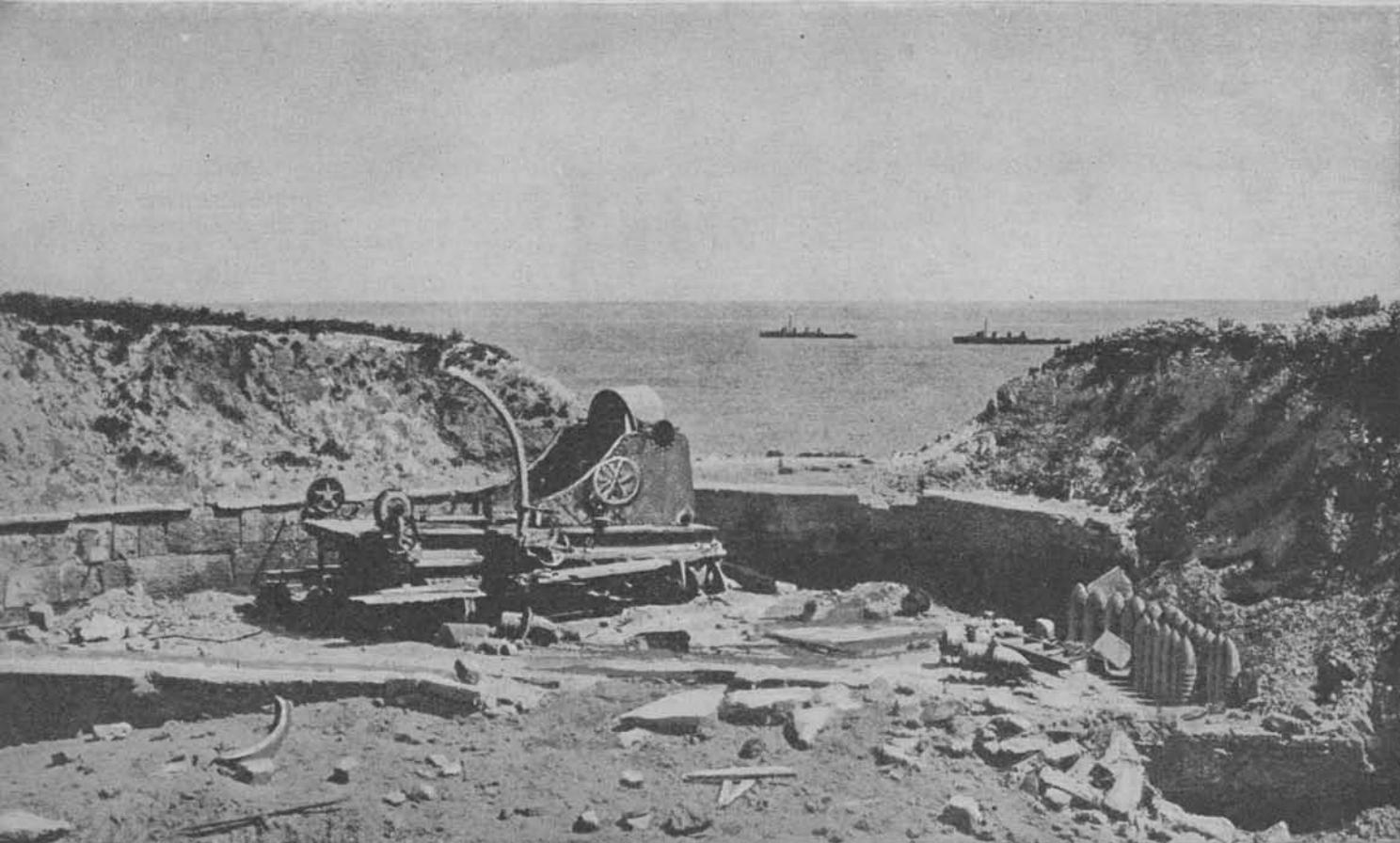
them all change, break, dissolve into dust, crumble as if by enchantment into strange new outlines under the enormous explosions of our 15-inch lyddite shells. Buildings gutted, walls and trenches turned inside out and upside down. Friend and foe surely must be wiped out together under such a fire—at least, they are stupefied, must cease taking a hand with their puny rifles and machine-guns? Not so.

**Amidst falling ruins; under smoke clouds of yellow, black, green and white; the beach, the cliffs and the ramparts of the Castle began, in the on-coming dusk, to sparkle all over with hundreds of tiny flecks of rifle fire.**

Many of our men who had been crouching all day under the sandy bank in the centre of the arena, were taking advantage of the pillars of smoke raised between them and their enemy to edge away to their right and scale the rampart leading to the Fort of Sedd el Bahr. Other small clusters lay still—they have made their last attack.

Now try to sleep. What of those men fighting for their lives in the darkness? Might they not, all of them, be sailing back to safe England, but for me? And I sleep! Well, why not, I *must* sleep whilst I may. The legend whereby a Commander-in-Chief works wonders during a battle dies hard. He may still lose the battle in a moment by losing heart. He may still win the battle by keeping a stiff upper lip. The old Bible idea of the Commander—when his hands grew heavy Amalek advanced, when he raised them Israel prevailed!

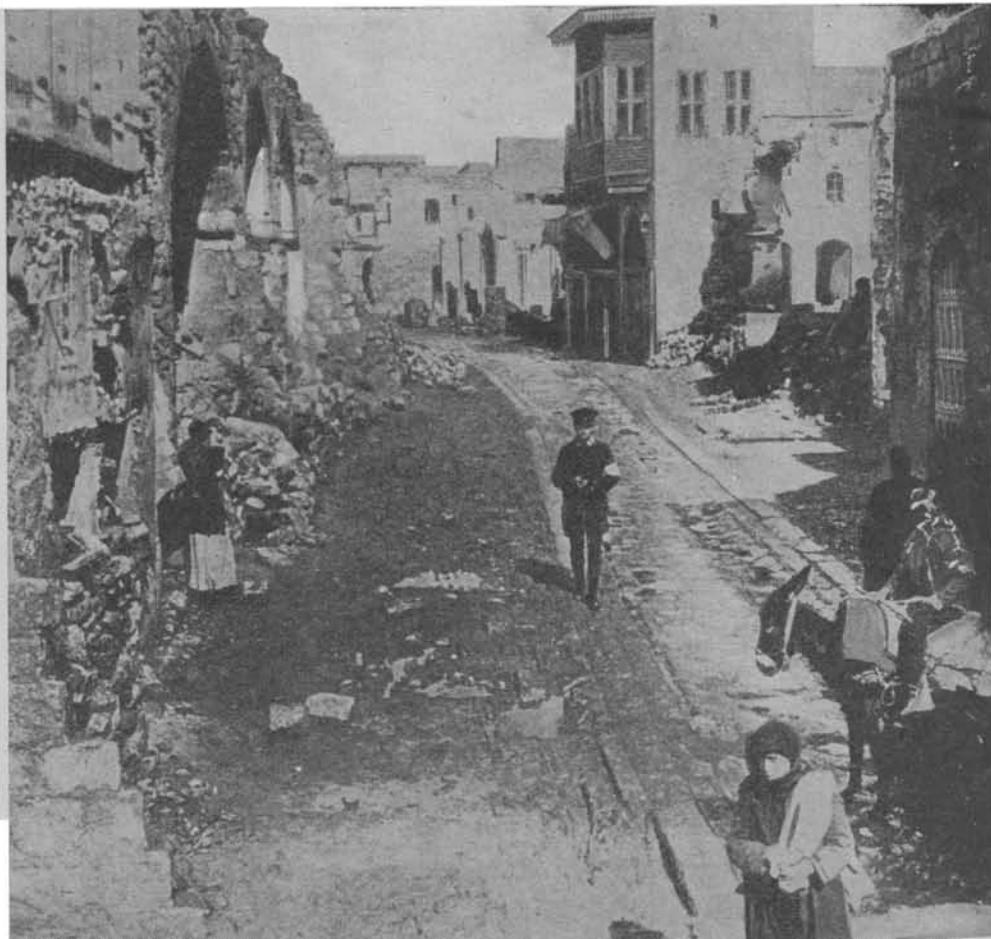
**B**UT nowadays, in precise proportion as his orders have been thorough, so will the actual conflict find him leaving the struggle to the troops. Old Oyama cooled his brain during the battle of the Shaho by shooting pigeons sitting on Chinese chimneys. My own dark hours pass more easily in making these jottings. Writing takes the strain off waiting. No order is to be issued until I get reports. I can't think now of anything left undone that I ought to have done. I have no more troops to lay my hands on—Hunter-Weston has more than he can land tonight. I won't win this battle by prowling up and down the gangways. No word yet about the losses, except that they have been heavy. If the Turks get hold of a lot of fresh men and throw them upon us during the night they may knock us off into the sea. No General knows his luck. That's the beauty of the business. But I feel sanguine all the same. The Turkish troops here will get no help tonight. And ours pour steadily ashore.



#### **SHELL FIRE AND SHATTERED HOPES IN GALLIPOLI**

These photographs well illustrate the results of the galling fire which the British Navy poured into the Turkish positions during the attempt to force the Dardanelles and the subsequent Gallipoli campaign. Above is a Turkish fort in the Dardanelles utterly destroyed by British naval guns. Below is a street in Chanak Kale, on the Asiatic shore of the Narrows, smashed by the guns of the Queen Elizabeth in the last attempt to thrust through to Constantinople, while left is a close-up view of the ruins of Sedd el Bahr, taken a month after the photograph reproduced in page 340.

*Photos, Central Press, Imperial War Museum and Photopress*



# HEROIC FIASCO of 'Y' BEACH

## Further Dark Hours of a Commander-in-Chief

by General Sir Ian Hamilton,  
G.C.B., G.C.M.G., D.S.O.

**SIR IAN HAMILTON** in this chapter continues his classic description of the British landing on the Gallipoli peninsula. The brightest hopes of the Commander-in-Chief were destined to be rudely disappointed—and on this the second day of the adventure he describes the growing anxiety which he felt lest the whole adventure should turn into a complete fiasco

APRIL 26. Queen Elizabeth.

**A**t 12.5 a.m. I was dragged out of a dead sleep by Braithwaite [Gen. Sir W. Braithwaite], who kept shaking me by the shoulder and saying, "Sir Ian! Sir Ian!" I had been having a good time for an hour far away somewhere, far from bloody turmoil, and before I quite knew where I was, my Chief of Staff repeated what he had, I think, said several times already, "Sir Ian, you've got to come right along—a question of life and death—you must settle it!" Braithwaite is a cool hand, but his tone made me wide awake in a second. I sprang from bed; flung on my "British Warm," and crossed to the Admiral's cabin—not his own cabin but the dining-saloon—where I found de Robeck himself, Rear-Admiral Thursby (in charge of the landing of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps), Roger Keyes, Braithwaite, Brigadier-General Carruthers (D.A. and Q.M.G. of the A. and N.Z. Corps), and Brigadier-General Cunliffe Owen (C.R.A. of the A. and N.Z. Corps). A cold hand clutched my heart as I scanned their faces. Carruthers gave me a message from Birdwood written in Godley's writing. I read it aloud:

"**B**OTH my Divisional Generals and Brigadiers have represented to me that they fear their men are thoroughly demoralized by shrapnel fire to which they have been subjected all day after exhaustion and gallant work in morning. Numbers have dribbled back from the firing line and cannot be collected in this difficult country. Even New Zealand Brigade which has been only recently engaged lost heavily and is to some extent demoralized. If troops are subjected to shell fire again tomorrow morning there is likely to be a fiasco as I have no fresh troops with which to replace those in firing-line. I know my representation is most serious, but if we are to re-embark it must be at once.—(Sgd.) BIRDWOOD."

The faces round that table took on a look—when I close my eyes there they sit—a look like nothing on earth unless it be the guests when their host flings salt upon the burning raisins. To gain time I asked one or two questions about the tactical position on shore, but Carruthers and Cunliffe Owen seemed unable to add any detail to Birdwood's general statement.

I TURNED to Thursby and said, "Admiral, what do you think?"

He said, "It will take the best part of three days to get that crowd off the beaches." "And where are the Turks?" I asked. "On the top of 'em."

"Well, then," I persisted, "tell me, Admiral, what do you think?"

"What do I think: well, I think myself they will stick it out if only it is put to them that they must." Without another word, all keeping silence, I wrote Birdwood as follows:

"Your news is indeed serious. But there is nothing for it but to dig yourselves right in and stick it out. It would take at least two days to re-embark you, as Admiral Thursby will explain to you. Meanwhile, the Australian submarine has got up through the Narrows and has torpedoed a gunboat at Chunuk. Hunter-Weston despite his heavy losses will be advancing tomorrow, which should divert pressure from you. Make a personal appeal to your men and Godley's to make a supreme effort to hold their ground.—(Sgd.) IAN HAMILTON."

"P.S.—You have got through the difficult business, now you have only to dig, dig, dig, until you are safe.—IAN H."

The deputation made off with this letter; new men carrying a clear order.

Be the upshot what it may, I shall never repent that order. Better to die on the enemy's ground than be butchered on the beaches like the runaway Persians at Marathon.

De Robeck and Keyes pat me on the back; will they go on doing so if things go horribly wrong? Midnight decisions take it out of one. Turned in and slept like a top till I was set spinning again at 4 a.m.

**A**t dawn the idea of retreat had retreated. The old Queen let fly her first shot at 5.30 a.m. Her shrapnel is a knockout. The explosion of the monstrous shell darkens the rising sun; the bullets cover an acre; the enemy seems stunned for a while after each discharge. One after the other Queen Elizabeth took on the Turkish guns along Sari Bair and swept the skyline with them.

A message of relief and thankfulness came out to us. Seeing how much they loved us—or rather our Long Toms—we hung around until about half-past eight smothering the enemy's guns whenever they dared show their snouts. By that hour our troops had regained their grip of themselves and also of the enemy. An organized counter-attack on the grand scale at dawn was the one thing I had dreaded, and that has not come off; only a bit of a push over the



**HAMILTON'S CHIEF OF STAFF**

Major-General Sir W. F. Braithwaite, Sir Ian Hamilton's Chief of Staff, who roused him on the fateful morning of April 26, is here seen, left, with his son, Captain V. Braithwaite, who was his A.D.C.

Imperial War Museum



**'THE SOUL OF ANZAC'**

Sir William Birdwood, who commanded the Australian and New Zealand troops in Gallipoli, is here seen at his headquarters on the upper bridge of H.M.S. Triumph. On account of his inspiring leadership he has been called "The Soul of Anzac."

downland by Gaba Tepe which was steadied by one of our enormous shrapnel.

We hear there is no change at Helles and Sedd el Bahr. Somewhere about 9 a.m. we picked up a wireless from the O.C. "Y" Beach which caused us some uneasiness. "We are holding the ridge," it said, "till the wounded are embarked." Why "till"? So I told the Admiral that as Birdwood seemed fairly comfortable, we ought to lose no time getting back to Sedd el Bahr, taking "Y" Beach on our way. At once we steamed south and hove to off "Y" Beach at 9.30 a.m. There the Sapphire, Dublin and Goliath were lying close inshore, and we could see a trickle of our men coming down the steep cliff and parties being ferried off to the Goliath; the wounded no doubt, but we did not see a single soul going *up* the cliff, whereas there were many loose groups hanging about on the beach. I mistrusted these dawdlers by the sea. There was no fighting; a rifle-shot now and then from the crests where we saw our fellows clearly.

THE little crowd and the boats on the beach were right under them and no one paid any attention to us or seemed to be in a hurry. Our naval and military signallers were at sixes and sevens. The Goliath wouldn't answer; the Dublin said the force was coming off, and we could not get into touch with the soldiers at all.

At about a quarter to ten the Sapphire asked us to fire over the cliffs into the country some hundreds of yards farther in, and so the Queen E. gave Krithia and the south of it a taste of her metal. Not much use, as the high

*Sport & General*

order," Hunter-Weston ought to have consulted me first as Birdwood consulted me last night.

THE Staff are clear against interference when I have no knowledge of the facts—and I suppose they are right. But, to see a part of my scheme, from which I had hoped so much, go wrong before my eyes is maddening! I imagined it; I pressed it through; a second battalion was added to it, and then the South Wales Borderers' company. Many sailors and soldiers, good men, had doubts as to whether the boats could get in, or whether, having done so, men armed and accoutred would be able to scale the yellow cliffs; or whether, having by some miracle climbed, they would not be knocked off with bayonets as they got to the top. I admitted each of these possibilities, but said that, taken together, they destroyed one another.

#### WE ARE DESPERADOES

IF the venture seemed so desperate even to ourselves, who are desperadoes, then the enemy chief would be of the same opinion, only more so; so that, supposing we *did* get up, at least we would not find resistance organized against us. Whether this was agreed to or not, the logic of a C.-in-C. has a convincing way of its own. But in all our discussions one thing was taken for granted—no one doubted that once our troops had got ashore, scaled the heights and dug themselves in, they would be able to hold on; no one doubted that, with the British Fleet at their backs, they would at least maintain their bridge-head into the enemy's vitals until we could decide what to do with it.

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cliffs hid the intervening hinterland from view, even from the crow's nests. A couple of shrapnel were also fired at the crestline of the cliff about half a mile farther north where there appeared to be some snipers. But the trickling down the cliffs continued. No one liked the look of things ashore. Our chaps can hardly be making off in this deliberate way without orders; and yet, if they *are* making off "by

At a quarter-past ten we steamed for Cape Helles, whilst I, with anxiety gnawing at me, wrote my first operations cable to K. [Lord Kitchener]:

"Thanks to God who calmed the seas and to the Royal Navy who rowed our fellows ashore as coolly as if at a regatta; thanks also to the dauntless spirit shown by all ranks of both Services, we have landed 29,000 upon six beaches in the face of desperate resistance from strong Turkish infantry forces well backed by artillery. Enemy are entrenched, line upon line, behind wire entanglements spread to catch us wherever we might try to concentrate for an advance. Worst danger zone, the open sea, now traversed, but on land not yet out of the wood. Our main covering detachment held up on water's edge, at foot of amphitheatre of low cliffs round the little bay west of Sedd el Bahr. At sunset last night a dashing attack was made by the 29th Division south-west along the heights from Tekke Burnu to set free the Dublins, Munsters and Hants, but at the hour of writing they are still pinned down to the beach.

#### COOL, CONFIDENT AUSTRALIANS

"THE Australians have done wonderfully at Gaba Tepe. They got 8,000 ashore to one beach between 3.30 a.m. and 8.30 a.m.; due to their courage, organization, sea discipline and steady course of boat practice. Navy report not one word spoken or movement made by any of these thousands of untried troops either during the transit over the water in the darkness or nearing the land when the bullets took their toll. But, as the keel of the boats touched bottom, each boat-load dashed into the water and then into the enemy's fire.

"At first it seemed that nothing could stop them, but by degrees wire, scrub and cliffs; thirst, sheer exhaustion broke the back of their impetus. Then the enemy's howitzers and field guns had it all their own way, forcing attack to yield a lot of ground. Things looked anxious for a bit, but by this morning's dawn all are dug in, cool, confident.

"But for the number and good shooting of Turkish field guns and howitzers, Birdwood would surely have carried the whole main ridge of Sari Bair. As it is, his troops are holding a long curve upon the crests of the lower ridges, identical, to a hundred yards, with the line planned by my General Staff in their instructions and pencilled by them upon the map.

"The French have stormed Kum Kale and are attacking Yeni Shahr. Although you excluded Asia from my operations, have been forced by tactical needs to ask

d'Amade to do this and so relieve us from artillery fire from the Asiatic shore.

"Deeply regret to report the death of Brigadier-General Napier, and to say that our losses, though not yet estimated, are sure to be very heavy.

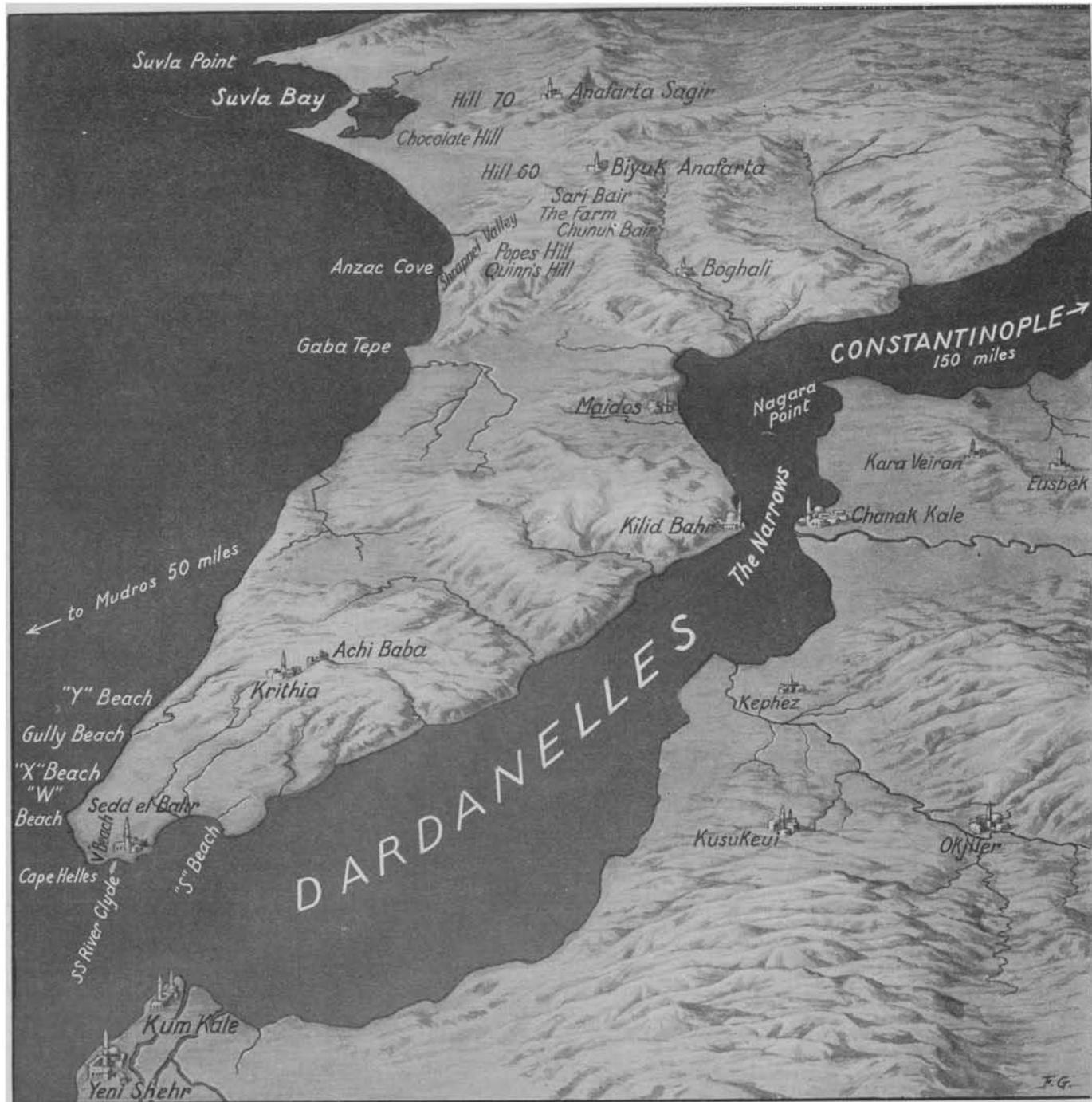
"If only this night passes without misadventures, I propose to attack Achi Baba tomorrow with whatever Hunter-Weston can scrape together of the 29th Division. Such an attack should force the enemy to relax their

grip on Sedd el Bahr. I can look now to the Australians to keep any enemy reinforcements from crossing the waist of the Peninsula."

[This was my original draft; it was slightly condensed for ciphering home.  
—Ian H., 1920.]

Relief from Gaba Tepe is almost swallowed up by the "Y" Beach fiasco—as we must, I suppose, take it to be. At Helles things seem much the same as last night. No word from

Hunter-Weston. Passed Cape Helles at 12.20 p.m. Weather now much brighter and warmer. At "Y" Beach the re-embarkation of troops was still going on. All quiet, the Goliath says: "The enemy was so roughly handled in an attack they made last night that they do not trouble our withdrawal." Too pleased to see us go, it seems! So this part of our plan has gone clean off the rails. De Robeck agrees that we don't know enough yet to warrant



GALLIPOLI—WHERE 30,000 MEN DIED

This bird's-eye view map shows the area in which the British and French forces landed on April 25, 1915, and the principal places mentioned in the chapters on the Gallipoli campaign. It is in perspective but the scale can be judged by the fact that the distance between Cape Helles and Suvla Point is approximately 20 miles.



#### THESE WERE THE FIRST TURKISH PRISONERS

Here are some of the first Turkish prisoners to be taken in Gallipoli. In one sense prisoners taken during the campaign were always troublesome, for there were no prison camps on the Peninsula and therefore they had to be taken to Alexandria on board the ships that passed to and fro with supplies for the troops. In the foreground are some of the many mules that were invaluable for transport over country where there were few roads.

*Sport & Genera*

intervention, but my orders ought to have been taken before a single fit officer or man was ferried back aboard ship. Never, since modern battles were invented by the Devil, has a Commander-in-Chief been so accessible to a message from any part of his force. Each theatre has its outfit of signallers, wireless, etc., and I can answer, or, send help, or rush myself upon the scene at twenty-five miles an hour with the Q.E.'s fifteen-inchers in my pocket. Here there is no question of emergency. . . .

Whilst having a hurried meal, Jack Churchill rushed down from the crow's-nest to say that he thought we had carried the fort above Sedd el Bahr. He had seen through a powerful naval glass some figures standing erect and silhouetted against the sky on the parapet. Only, he argued, British soldiers would choose the sky-line to stand against during a battle. That is so.

ON to Gaba Tepe, just in time to see the collapse of the dreaded Turkish counter-attack. The Turks have been attacking all the time, but this is—or, rather, I can happily now say "was"—an organized effort to burst in through our centre. No doubt the panorama was alarming, but we all of us—we on the Q.E.—felt sure that Australia and New Zealand had pulled themselves together and were going to give socks to Enver and his army.

The nightmares of the might-have-beens add brightness to the morning. Imagine, had these brave lads entrusted to us by the Commonwealth and Dominion now been penned in upon the beaches, crowding into their boats, whilst some desperate rearguard was trying to hold off the onrush of the triumphant Turks!

Here come the Turks! First a shower of shells, dropping all along the lower ridges and out over the Bay. Very pretty, the shells—at half a mile! Prince of Wales' feathers, springing suddenly out of the blue to a loud hammer-stroke; or else the shrapnel, pure white, twisting a moment and pirouetting as children in their night-gowns pirouette, then gliding off the field two or three together, an aerial ladies' chain.

Next our projectiles; over the sea they flew; over the heads of our fighters; covered the higher hillsides and skyline with smudges of black, yellow and green. Smoky fellows these—with a fiery spark at their core, and wherever they touch the earth, rocks leap upwards in columns of dust to the sky. Under so many savage blows the labouring mountains brought forth Turks.

Here and there advancing lines, dots moving over green patches; dots following one another across a broad red scar on the flank of Sari Bair; others following, and yet others and others and others, closing in, disappearing, reappearing in close waves converging on the central and highest part of our position. The tic-tac of the machine-guns: we have got some guns right up the precipitous cliff. The noise doubled, redoubled, quadrupled, expanded into one immense tiger-like growl. A solid mass of the enemy crossing the green patch, and then the good Queen Lizzie picked up her targets—crash!!! Where are they now? . . .

At 4.30 we left Gaba Tepe and sailed for Helles. At 4.50 we were opposite Krithia, passing "Y" Beach. Troops, wounded, gear, have all vanished. Only the petrol tins they took for

water shine still, huge diamonds in the evening sun. The enemy let them slip off without a shot fired. The last boat-load got aboard the Goliath at 4 p.m., but they had forgotten some of their kit, so the blue-jackets rowed ashore as they might to Southsea pier and brought it off for them; and again no shot fired!

HOVE to off Cape Helles at quarter-past five. Joyous confirmation of Sedd el Bahr capture, and our lines run straight across from "X" to Morto Bay. . . .

At 6.20 p.m. started back, intending to see all snug at Gaba Tepe; but, picking up some Turkish guns as targets in Krithia and on the slopes of Achi Baba, we hove to off Cape Tekke and opened fire. We soon silenced these guns, though others, unseen, kept popping. At 6.50 we ceased fire. At seven Admiral Guépratte came on board and tells us splendid news about Kum Kale. At 2 o'clock the artillery fire from shore and ships became too hot for the Turks entrenched in the cemetery, and they put up the white flag and came in as prisoners, 500 of them. A hundred more had been taken during the night fighting, but there was treachery and some of those were killed. Kum Kale has been a brilliant bit of work, though I fear we have lost nearly a quarter of our effectives. Guépratte agrees we would do well to hold on for another twenty-four hours. At a quarter-past seven he took his leave, and we let drop our anchor where we were, off Cape Tekke.

SO now the price has been paid for the first step, and that is the step that counts. Blood, sweat, fire—with these we have forged our master key and forced it into the lock of the Hellespont, rusty and dusty with centuries of disuse. Grant us, O Lord, tenacity to turn it, till through that open door Queen Elizabeth of England sails East for the Golden Horn!



*Photos, Central Press*

#### **'W' BEACH, SCENE OF THE FINEST HEROISM IN AN ARMY OF HEROES**

The centre photograph of "W" Beach was taken on April 26, the day after the landing of the Lancashire Fusiliers, of which Admiral Wemyss said "I cannot conceive . . . a finer exhibition of heroism." Here the beach has been won and troops are still coming ashore in support of the gallant Lancashires. Close inshore are drifters and some of the lighters which brought the troops ashore from the warships and transports. At the top of the page is a photograph of "W" Beach after the enemy had been driven back and a camp was established there. It shows the cliffs up which the men who first landed had to climb in face of a galling fire. The bottom photograph gives another view of part of the camp with a pile of equipment at the top of the cliff.

# WHEN Our DEAD CLOGGED Our TRENCHES

## The Turkish Attack on Dead Man's Ridge

by 'Anzac'

THE author, a New Zealand sapper who remains anonymous, took part in the Anzac landing on April 25. He continues the story of the Gallipoli campaign to the third day, when the Turks made the most determined effort to drive the British into the sea. It is a ghastly but memorable account of one of the fiercest days of fighting of the whole Great War

IT was on Tuesday, April 27, that Enver Pasha launched the attack against our lines that was to drive us into the sea. All through Monday and Monday night our transports were landing fresh troops under heavy and constant shelling from the Turkish big guns; under cover of the darkness these troops were marched up and placed, some in the fire trenches to fill up the many gaps caused by the enemy's shrapnel and machine-guns, others massed in reserve at the base of the cliff. Yet not a man of those who had stormed the position the first day, and who had been hard at it ever since, could be spared from the front line. Come to think, I don't fancy a single one would have left it. The feeling had got abroad that the change was going to be taken out of the Turks this time (it had leaked out that the big attack would certainly take place on Monday night or Tuesday morning), and the chaps were fair mad to get a bit of their own back. They did, too.

OUR position as finally formed extended along the very crest, or rim, of the cliff for a distance of about two miles, or rather better. Here and there deep gullies, or canyons, ran into and cut the line, or caused the line to "bulge" considerably towards the enemy. Such was "Shrapnel Gully" (see page 338), at the head of which lay "Quinn's Post," where our trenches had to be pushed perilously forward owing to the configuration of the ground. "Quinn's Post," in fact, formed the key to the whole position; it lay right in the centre of the line, and had it been carried the whole bag of tricks would, in my opinion, have crumpled up badly and a big disaster might have occurred. When your centre is pierced it's no picnic. To the left of "Quinn's" was "Dead Man's Ridge," held by the Turks, from which they were able to snipe right down

"Shrapnel Gully"—and, incidentally, our camps and dug-outs. . . . No man was safe from those snipers; they seemed to be everywhere—before, alongside, and *behind* our lines even. Hence no supplies could be brought up in daylight; everything had to be done at night when there was only shell-fire to worry about. Afterwards we got those snipers fossicked out (they met strange deaths sometimes!), but meantime our life wasn't anything to hanker after.

Had the enemy only succeeded in pushing us over the rim of the ridge, nothing would have saved us. Below lay the open beach. We couldn't possibly have been taken off with the heights in the hands of the Turks. I guess it would have been one of the biggest and finest wipe-outs in history. Old Enver Pasha thought it would look jolly well in the morning papers, I expect. Anyway, he had no end of a hard try—and, to give him and his men their due, I don't mind admitting that they weren't so very far from succeeding.

I don't pretend to describe that struggle. No man could. It was grit, tenacity and gameness opposed to overwhelming numbers. A battle of giants. It was sickening; brutal—and yet splendid.

Men fought that day stripped to the waist; fought till their rifles jammed, picked up another—and went on fighting. Men with broken legs refused to leave the trench, cursing those who would have assisted them—went on firing until a second bullet crippled their rifle arm. Yet still they clung on, handing up clips of cartridges to their mates, all the time imploring them to "give the sons of hell!"

THEY weren't Sunday-school models, those big-hearted, happy-go-lucky toughs from the Back of Beyond. But they knew how to fight—and die. They were men right through, not kid-glove soldiers. They lived hard, fought hard, and died hard. And what if they did

die with curses on their lips! Who shall dare to judge them, dying as *they* died? And it may be that the Big Padre up aloft turned a deaf ear to those oaths begotten of the life they had lived—or perhaps He failed to hear them in the noise of battle!

The Turks attacked gamely, like the big, brave soldiers they are and always were. Led by their splendid officers, they came on in masses, shoulder to shoulder, and did all that in them lay to rush our trenches. They were met by a storm of bullets that would have staggered anything born of woman.

They did stagger them; they recoiled before that leaden blast that piled their dead and wounded up in ghastly heaps and ridges like broken-down walls—before that smashing fire delivered at twenty yards range. They recoiled—yes. But run—no! They charged, charged right through that hurricane of machine-gun and rifle fire—charged right up to our parapets.

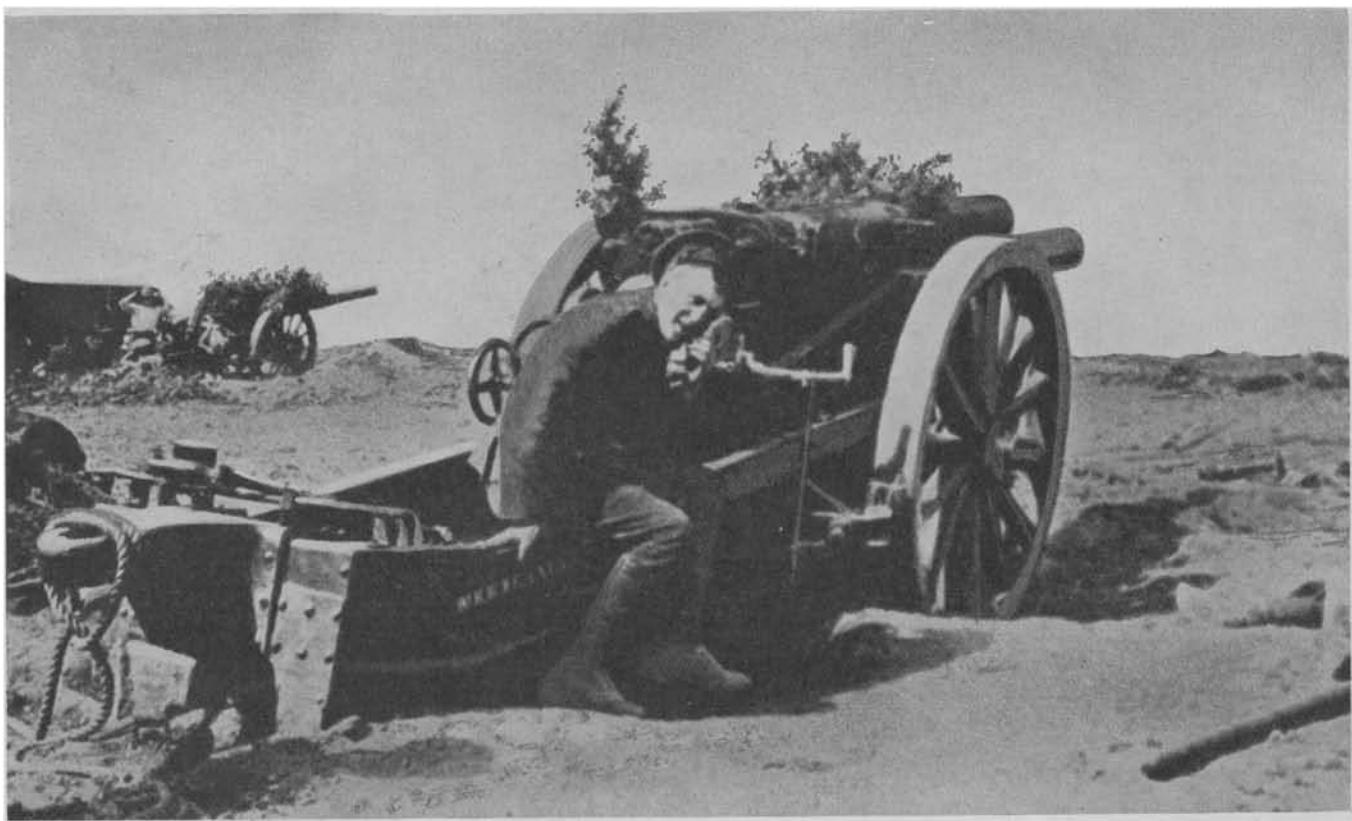
And now it was our turn. Like one man the colonial infantry leaped from their cover. Crash! They were into the Turks. Followed a wild hurly-burly of hacking and stabbing while one might count twenty slowly; then the enemy were beaten back, and the defenders ran, limped, and crawled back to their trenches and took to their rifles again.

Thus it went on from before dawn till towards evening. Charge and counter



TURKEY'S GENERALISSIMO

Turkish Imperial War Minister and Generalissimo during the war, Enver Pasha, who in the Young Turk revolt in 1908 and during the Balkan and Tripoli Wars had won fame, was at the age of 32 appointed to his high office. He was supported in his task mainly by Marshal Liman von Sanders.



Central Press

#### THE FIRST GUNS IN GALLIPOLI

charge, till men reeled from sheer exhaustion, and their blood-clotted weapons slipped from hands sticky with the same red paint. I am not exaggerating; those who were present on that awful Tuesday will bear me out.

We were hard pressed. The strongest men in the world are only human. Loss of sleep, insufficient food, and practically no water, combined with the exertions we had already gone through, began to tell their tale. Our losses were also very heavy; and owing to the slippery state of the clay soil, following on an all-night of rain, our reserves could not get up quickly enough.

THUS yards and yards of trench were at times empty of all save dead and wounded men, and in some cases the Turks effected a footing in them; they were always driven out again, however, or bayoneted to a man. Our fellows were simply magnificent; budge they would not. To capture those trenches meant the killing of the men who held them; you couldn't *drive* them out. And the officers were just the same.

But it was cruel to hear the continual cries of :

"Stretcher bearers! Stretcher bearers to the right!"

"Stretcher bearers to the left!"

"Ammunition! Send up ammunition! We haven't a——round here!"

"Reinforce! For God's sake reinforce! They're into No. 8! Christ, boys, get a move on!"

One of the great difficulties of the Gallipoli campaign was the question of artillery. The water inshore was so shallow that all guns and munitions had to be landed from the transports on lighters, and the steep cliffs at the western extremity of the Peninsula made it impossible to get many big guns into position. Above is one of the first pieces of artillery to be landed. For heavy artillery the Army depended chiefly on the Navy, and the accuracy of fire by the ships at long range was remarkable.

At this time we had neither support trenches nor communications—just one thin line, which, if broken, meant the loss of the ridge with all that that meant. We were also so clogged up with dead in our trenches that to make room for the living we had to throw the bodies out over the back. In many cases where our line was cut on the edge of the ridge these bodies rolled right down to the foot of the cliff.

At "Quinn's Post" things were about as bad as they could be. There was only the merest apology for a track from the "Gully" up to the trenches situated on the very lip of the crest, and at one time when reinforcements were making their way in single file up this track they had to scramble in and out, through and over, dead men lying tossed about anyhow, while all the way right down to the valley the wounded were lying "heads and tails" awaiting transport to the beach. It wasn't the most encouraging sight in the world for the fellows coming up straight off the transports.

In one place quite a little stack of bodies had been huddled together to one side of the track; there might

have been eighteen or twenty in the lot. Owing to the water running down this stack began to move, and kept on moving till it blocked the track up altogether. I don't know how many chaps tumbled into that heap and got tied up in it, but eventually a fatigue party had to be told off to build up the bodies as you would build sheaves on a wagon. We had no time to bury our dead for the first few days—and in that climate you don't want to keep them above ground for many hours.

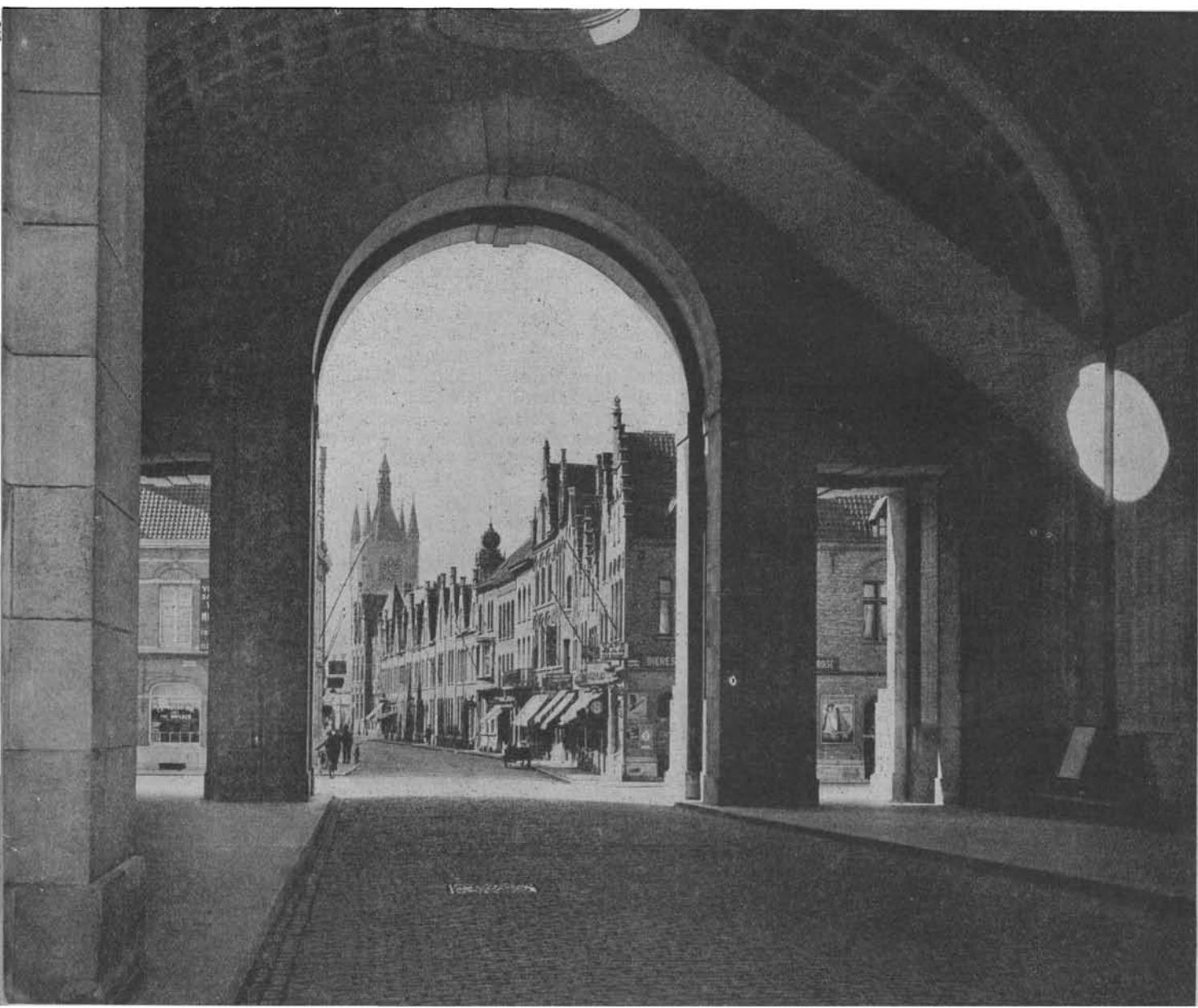
As the day wore on it became evident that the Turks had shot their bolt. The attack died down, then ceased altogether, and save for the heavy rifle and artillery fire they kept up on our trenches, we weren't troubled by them for some time. They had lost tremendously; the ground along our front looked like a heavy crop of wheat after the binder had been through it—either 4,000 or 7,000 dead lay there. (And they lay there unburied for three weeks.) At last we were able to get a little sorely needed rest. We had been pushed to the extremest limit of human endurance.



**MENIN, THE GATE  
OF ENDLESS AND  
UNDYING MEMORIES**

Past the debris of the Menin Gate hordes of British soldiers marched to the horror of the salient at Ypres. Above is shown a photograph taken along that frightful causeway when remnants of houses still remained, in May 1915. Below is a scene from within the great memorial that stands at Ypres today, in honour of the thousands of British fighting men who fell in that shell-scorched salient.

*Photos, Imperial War Museum, and A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.*



# Ypres: The Second Battle

April 22 — May 7, 1915

OWARDS the end of April the Germans made a further determined effort to break through the Ypres salient and force their way on to the Channel ports. ¶ On this occasion they made their first use of poison gas, which at first caused widespread demoralization amongst the Allied defenders. By a miracle of endurance the line was again saved. ¶ The story of Second Ypres is told in this section by Colonel McCrae, famous author of "In Flanders Fields," Lord Beaverbrook who, as Sir Max Aitken, was with the Canadians, by A. R. Hossack, of the Q.V.R.'s, and by a famous author and archaeologist, Stanley Casson, who served with the E. Lancs. ¶ During the period the world was shocked by the news of the sinking of the Lusitania. That dreadful disaster is described in the words of a most distinguished survivor, Viscountess Rhondda.

\* 67 April 23 — 25, 1915

## A POET Encounters TRAGEDY

### The Horror of Second Ypres

by Lieut.-Colonel John McCrae, M.D.

Author of 'In Flanders Fields'

Friday, April 23, 1915.

**A**s we moved up last evening there was heavy firing about 4.30 on our left, the hour at which the general attack with gas was made when the French line broke. We could see the shells bursting over Ypres, and in a small village to our left, meeting General —, C.R.A. of one of the divisions, he ordered us to halt for orders. We sent forward notifications to our headquarters, and sent out orderlies to get in touch with the batteries of the farther forward brigades already in action. . . . They had a tough time, but got away safely and did wonderful service. One battery fired in two opposite directions at once, and both batteries fired at point-blank, open sights, at Germans in the open. They were at times quite without infantry on their front, for their position was behind the French to the left of the British line.

**A**s we sat on the road we began to see the French stragglers—men without fire-arms, wounded men, teams, wagons, civilians, refugees—some by the roads, some across country, all talking, shouting—the very picture of débâcle. I must say they were the "tag-enders" of a fighting line rather than the line itself. They streamed on, shouting to us scraps of not too inspiring information while we stood and took our medicine, and picked out gun positions in the fields in case we had to go in there and then. The men were splendid—not a word; not a shake; and it was a terrific test. Traffic whizzed by—ambulances, transport, ammunition, supplies, dispatch riders—and the shells thundered into the town, or burst high in the air nearer us, and the refugees screamed. Women, old men,

little children, hopeless, tearful, quiet or excited, tired, dodging the traffic—and the wounded in singles or in groups. Here and there I could give a momentary help, and the ambulances picked up as they could. So the cold moonlight night wore on—no change save that the towers of Ypres showed up against the glare of the city burning; and the shells still sailed in.

At 9.30 our ammunition column (the part that had been "in") appeared. Major — had waited, like Casabianca, for orders until the Germans were 500 yards away; then he started, getting safely away save for one wagon lost and some casualties in men and horses. He found our column, and we prepared to send forward ammunition as soon as we could learn where the batteries had taken up position in retiring, for retire they had to. Eleven, twelve, and finally grey day broke, and we still waited. At 3.45 word came to go in and support a French counter-attack at 4.30 a.m. Hastily we got the order spread; it was 4 a.m. and three miles to go.

Of one's feelings all this night—the asphyxiated French soldiers—of the women and children—of the cheery, steady British reinforcements that moved up quietly past us, going up, not back—I could write, but you can imagine.

**W**E took the road at once, and went up at the gallop. The colonel rode ahead to scout a position (we had only four guns, part of the ammunition column, and the brigade staff; the 1st and 4th Batteries were back in reserve at our last billet). Along the roads we went and made our place on time, pulled up for ten minutes just short of the position, where I put Bonfire [his horse] with my groom in a farmyard,

and went forward on foot—only a quarter of a mile or so—then we advanced. Bonfire had soon to move; a shell killed a horse about four yards away from him, and he wisely took other ground. Meantime we went on into the position we were to occupy for seventeen days, though we could not guess that. I can hardly say more than that it was near the Yser Canal.

We got into action at once, under heavy gunfire. We were to the left entirely of the British line, and behind French troops, and so we remained for eight days. A colonel of the R.A., known to fame, joined us and camped with us; he was our link with the French headquarters, and was in local command of the guns in this locality. When he left us eight days later he said, "I am glad to get out of this hell-hole." He was a great comfort to us, for he was very capable, and the entire battle was largely fought "on our own," following the requests of the infantry on our front, and scarcely guided by our own staff at all.

We at once set out to register our targets, and almost at once had to get



GUNNER, DOCTOR AND POET

This distinguished Canadian, Colonel John McCrae, a Boer War gunner, did magnificent service as a medical officer. Author of the famous war poem "In Flanders Fields," he died in January 1918. In the second battle of Ypres he was attached to the 1st Brigade, Canadian Artillery.



## RAMPARTS OF YPRES — THEN AND NOW

Ypres was four or five times besieged in the 16th and 17th centuries, and the ancient Ramparts and Moat, which had once been held against Alva's soldiers, formed an important part in the British defences. Above is a section of the Ramparts near the Menin Gate, in 1915, but against the hurricane of shells that the Germans rained upon them, the defences had to be reinforced by sandbags and dug-outs. Below is the other side of the Ramparts, showing the tranquil waters of the Moat as they are today.

*Photos, Imperial War Museum, and A. J. Insall, copyright A.P. Ltd.*



into steady firing on quite a large sector of front. We dug in the guns as quickly as we could, and took as headquarters some infantry trenches already sunk on a ridge near the canal. We were subject from the first to a steady and accurate shelling, for we were all but in sight, as were the German trenches about 2,000 yards to our front. At times the fire would come in salvos quickly repeated. Bursts of fire would be made for ten or fifteen minutes at a time. We got all varieties of projectile, from 3-inch to 8-inch, or perhaps 10-inch; the small ones usually as air bursts, the larger percussion and air, and the heaviest percussion only.

MY work began almost from the start—steady but never overwhelming, except perhaps once for a few minutes. A little cottage behind our ridge served as a cook-house, but was so heavily hit the second day that we had to be chary of it. During bursts of fire I usually took the back slope of the sharply crested ridge for what shelter it offered. At three our 1st and 4th arrived, and went into action at once a few hundred yards in our rear. Wires were at once put out, to be cut by shells hundreds and hundreds of times, but always repaired by our indefatigable lineman. So the day wore on; in the night the shelling still kept up. Three different German attacks were made and repulsed. If we suffered by being close up, the Germans suffered from us, for already tales of good shooting came down to us. I got some sleep, despite the constant firing; for we had none last night.

*Saturday, April 24, 1915.*

BEHOLD us now anything less than two miles north of Ypres on the west side of the canal. This runs north, each bank flanked with high elms, with bare trunks of the familiar Netherlands type. A few yards to the west a main road runs, likewise bordered. The Censor will allow me to say that on the high bank between these we had our headquarters. The ridge is, perhaps, fifteen to twenty feet high, and slopes forward fifty yards to the water. The back is more steep and slopes quickly to a little subsidiary waterway, deep but dirty.

Where the guns were I shall not say; but they were not far, and the German aeroplanes that viewed us daily with all but impunity knew very well. A road crossed over the canal and interrupted the ridge; across the road from us was our billet—the place we cooked in, at least, and where we usually took our meals. Looking to the south,



**IN THE DAYS BEFORE DEVASTATION**

The destruction of the country round Ypres was slow but terribly sure. Here is a typical Belgian road near Vlamertinghe in March 1915, about a month before the beginning of the second battle of Ypres. As the tall poplars still standing show, it has not yet been under heavy fire, and the Army traffic, all that it now carries, passes along undisturbed. It was soon to be the scene of fierce fighting, for though Vlamertinghe never fell into enemy hands, the village and the surrounding country suffered complete devastation.

*Imperial War Museum*

between the trees, we could see the ruins of the city: to the front on the skyline, with rolling ground in the front, pitted by French trenches, the German lines; to the left front, several farms and a windmill, and farther left, again near the canal, thicker trees and more farms. The farms and windmills were soon burnt. Several farms we used for observing posts were also quickly burnt during the next three or four days. All along behind us at varying distances French and British guns; the flashes at night lit up the sky.

These high trees were at once a pro-

tection and a danger. Shells that struck them were usually destructive. When we came in the foliage was still very thin. Along the road, which was constantly shelled "on spec" by the Germans, one saw all the sights of war: wounded men, limping or carried, ambulances, trains of supply, troops, army mules, and tragedies.

I saw one bicycle orderly: a shell exploded and he seemed to pedal on for eight or ten revolutions and then collapsed in a heap—dead. Straggling soldiers would be killed or wounded, horses also, until it got to be a nightmare.



L.N.A.

#### OUR HORSES, TOO, WERE HEROES

Lt. Col. McCrae's wish that he could have assured the "good old horses" of a peaceful pasture once more could not be fulfilled, for the casualties in the artillery and transport were heavy. But the Army Veterinary Corps worked heroically to relieve the suffering, with careful attention to small wounds and injuries, and a painless death for those beyond hope. Here a sergeant of the Army Veterinary Corps is sewing up a wound in a horse's nose.

I used to shudder every time I saw wagons or troops on that road. My dug-out looked out on it. I got a square hole, eight by eight, dug in the side of the hill (west), roofed over with remnants to keep out the rain, and a little sandbag parapet on the back raised so as to prevent pieces of "back-kick shells" from coming in, or prematures from our own or the French guns for that matter. Some straw on the floor completed it.

The ground was treacherous, and a slip the first night nearly buried —. So we had to be content with walls straight up and down, and trust to the height of the bank for safety. All places along the bank were more or less alike—all squirrel holes.

THIS morning we supported a heavy French attack at 4.30. There had been three German attacks in the night, and everyone was tired. We got heavily shelled.

In all, some eight or ten of our trees were cut by shells—cut right off, the upper part of the tree subsiding heavily and straight down, as a usual thing. One would think a piece about a foot long was just instantly cut out, and

these trees were about eighteen inches in diameter.

The gas fumes came very heavily: some blew down from the infantry trenches, some came from the shells. One's eyes smarted, and breathing was very laboured. Up to noon today we fired 2,500 rounds. Last night Colonel Morrison and I slept at a French colonel's headquarters near by, and in the night our room was filled up with wounded. I woke up and shared my bed with a chap with "a wounded leg and a chill." Probably thirty wounded men were brought into the one little room.

Colonel —, R.A., kept us in communication with the French general in whose command we were. I bunked down in the trench on the top of the ridge. The sky was red with the glare of the city still burning, and we could hear the almost constant procession of large shells sailing over from our left front into the city. The crashes of their explosion shook the ground where we were. After a terribly hard day, professionally and otherwise, I slept well; but it rained and the trench was awfully muddy and wet.

Sunday, April 25, 1915.

The weather brightened up and we got at it again. This day we had several heavy attacks, prefaced by heavy artillery fire. These bursts of fire would result in our getting 100 to 150 rounds right on us or near by. The heavier our fire (which was on the trenches entirely), the heavier theirs.

OUR food supply came up at dusk in wagons, and the water was any we could get; but, of course, treated with chloride of lime. The ammunition had to be brought down the roads at the gallop, and the more firing the more wagons. The men would quickly carry the rounds to the guns, as the wagons had to halt behind our hill. The good old horses would swing around at the gallop, pull up in an instant and stand puffing and blowing, but with their heads up, as if to say, "Wasn't that well done?" It makes you want to kiss their dear old noses and assure them of a peaceful pasture once more. Today we got our dressing-station dug-out complete, and we slept there at night.

Three farms in succession burned on our front—colour in the otherwise dark. The flashes of shells over the front and rear in all directions. The city still burning and the procession still going on. I dressed a number of French wounded; one Turco prayed to Allah and Mohammed all the time I was dressing his wound. On the front field one can see the dead lying here and there, and in places where an assault has been they lie very thick on the front slopes of the German trenches. Our telephone wagon team hit by a shell; two horses killed and another wounded. I did what I could for the wounded one and he subsequently got well.

THIS night, beginning after dark, we got a terrible shelling which kept up till two or three in the morning. Finally I got to sleep, though it was still going on. We must have got a couple of hundred rounds, in singles or pairs. Every one burst over us, would light up the dug-out, and every hit in front would shake the ground and bring down small bits of earth on us, or else the earth thrown into the air by the explosion would come spattering down on our roof and into the front of the dug-out. Colonel Morrison tried the mess-house, but the shelling was too heavy, and he and the adjutant joined Cosgrave and me, and we four spent an anxious night there in the dark. One officer was on watch "on the bridge" (as we called the trench at the top of the ridge) with the telephones.



L.N.A.

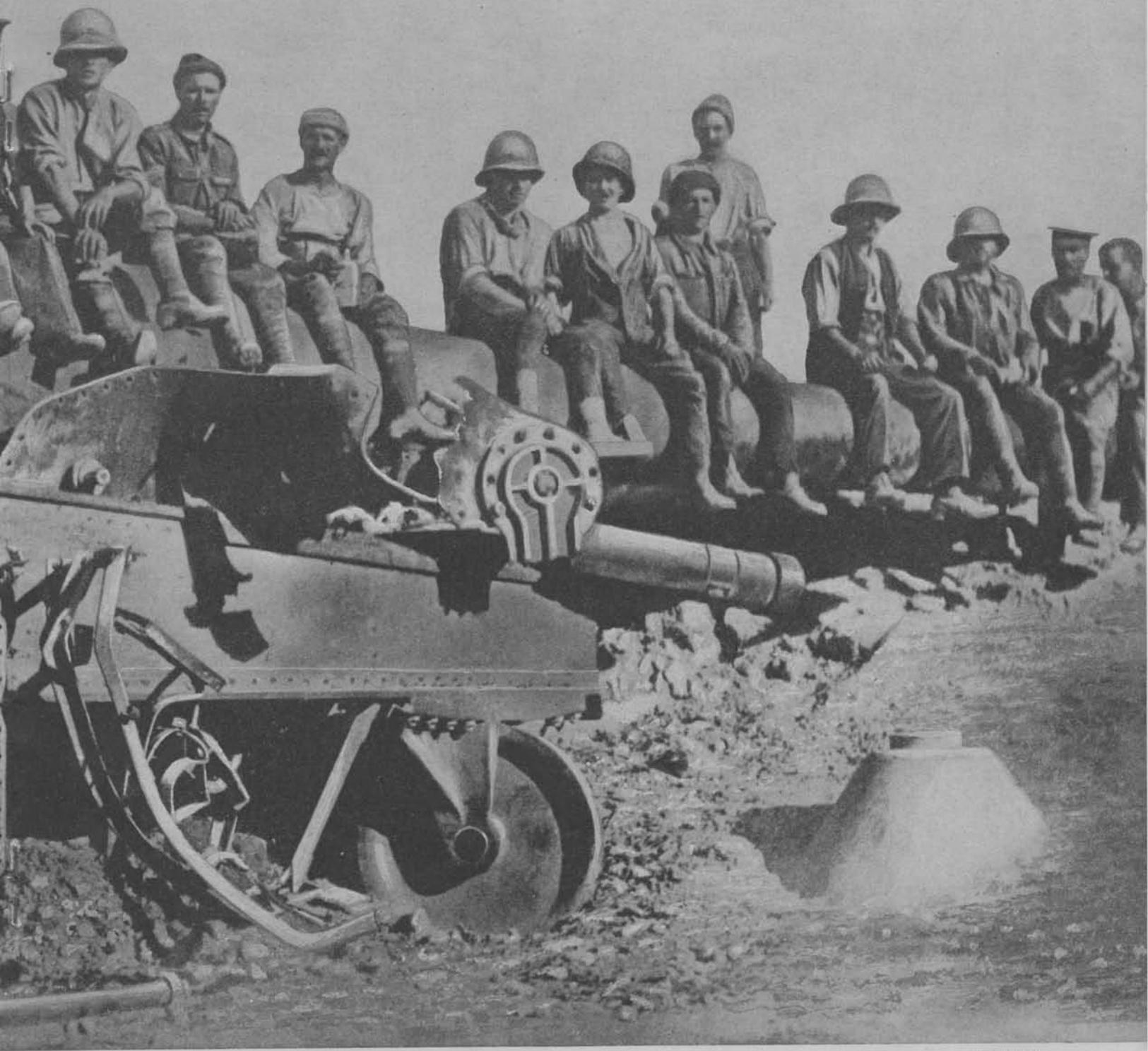
**RARE LUXURY OUT OF A CANVAS BUCKET**

In the first years of the war a real bath was a rare luxury for the soldiers, even behind the lines, but one that every man valued perhaps more than any other. Ablutions were sometimes performed in strange places, and this officer is taking the nearest approach he can get to a shower-bath in a railway siding. His batman pours a stream of cold water over him from a canvas bucket.



#### WHAT 'LIZZIE' DID TO A TURKISH BIG GUN

In the attempt to force the Dardanelles from the sea the first task that lay before the Allied Fleet was to reduce the fort at Helles on the toe of the Peninsula where the heroic landings were afterwards made. On February 25 the Agamemnon opened fire at a range of 10,000 yards, but the 9.4 guns of the fort were soon straddling her, and she was ordered to weigh anchor. Before she could get out of range she was hit seven times, with armour-piercing shells, in ten minutes. Most of the shells broke up without bursting, but three men were killed and five seriously wounded, while her side was pierced above the waterline.



*Central Press*

Then came the Queen Elizabeth with her 15-in. guns. She had only recently been commissioned, and for want of gun-practice found it at first difficult to get the range. It was not until her sixteenth or seventeenth shot that she hit the Cape Helles Fort. Above is the result—one of the 94 guns completely wrecked amidst the débris of the fort. This photograph, taken after the British landing at Gallipoli, shows twenty British soldiers sitting in triumph on this proof of "Lizzie's" prowess. The pivoted wheels on which the gun swung round on rails can be seen amidst the shattered mounting.



#### WHEN THE TERROR OF GAS FIRST CAME TO THE TRENCHES

The first use of gas by the Germans on April 22, 1915, was received with almost incredulous horror by the whole civilized world. Defensive measures were at once devised, and these took the form of masks, the first of which were issued during the early days of May. Above, men of B Company, 1st Cameronians, preparing for a gas attack in the Bois-Grenier sector on May 20, 1915. The masks consisted of a flannel pad, chemically treated, and mica goggles to protect the eyes. It was a primitive device which would have been useless against the more powerful gases used later. It was not until July 6 that the whole army was equipped with the bag type "smoke helmet."



Swaine

**FAMOUS EYE WITNESS**

From 1915 onwards Lord Beaverbrook was closely associated with the Canadian Division, as "Eye Witness" in 1915. He was Canadian Government Representative at the Front in 1916, and Officer in Charge of Canadian Records 1917.

**M**y story of the second battle of Ypres is the story of how the Canadian Division, enormously outnumbered—for they had in front of them at least four divisions, supported by immensely heavy artillery—with a gap still existing, though reduced, in their lines, and with dispositions made hurriedly under the stimulus of critical danger, fought through the day and through the night, and then through another day and night; fought under their officers until, as happened to so many, these perished gloriously, and then fought from the impulsion of sheer valour because they came from fighting stock.

The enemy, of course, was aware—whether fully or not may perhaps be doubted—of the advantage his breach in the line had given him, and immediately began to push a formidable series of attacks on the whole of the newly-formed Canadian salient. If it is possible to distinguish, when the attack was everywhere so fierce, it developed with particular intensity at this moment on the apex of the newly-formed line running in the direction of St. Julien.

**F**OUR British guns were taken in a wood comparatively early in the evening of April 22. The General Officer commanding the Canadian Division had no intention of allowing the enemy to retain possession of either the wood or the guns without a desperate struggle, and he ordered a counter-attack towards

# CANADIAN COURAGE and SELF-SACRIFICE

## At the Second Ypres Battle

by Lord Beaverbrook

**L**ORD BEAVERBROOK, who as Sir Max Aitken was Canadian "Eye Witness," had unexampled opportunities for watching the deeds of gallantry of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. He here describes the heroic actions during the Second Battle of Ypres, which in part or whole fell under his own observation. In the words of his friend Bonar Law, Prime Minister in 1922, his account is "a model of lucid, picturesque and sympathetic narrative." Here he also describes the effects of the first use of poison gas by the Germans on the Ypres front

the wood to be made by the 3rd Infantry Brigade under General Turner. This Brigade was then reinforced by the 2nd Battalion under Lieut.-Colonel Watson and the 3rd (Toronto) Battalion under Lieut.-Colonel Rennie, both of the 1st Brigade. The 7th Battalion (British Columbia Regiment), from the 2nd Brigade, had by this time occupied entrenchments in support of the 3rd Brigade. The 10th Battalion of the 2nd Brigade, intercepted on its way up as a working party, was also placed in support of the 3rd Brigade.

The assault upon the wood was launched shortly after midnight of April 22-23 by the 10th Battalion and 16th (Canadian-Scottish) Battalion, respectively commanded by Lieut.-Colonel Boyle and Lieut.-Colonel R. G. E. Leckie. The advance was made under the heaviest machine-gun and rifle fire, the wood was reached, and, after a desperate struggle by the light of a misty moon, they took the position at the point of the bayonet.

An officer who took part in the attack described to me how the men about him fell under the fire of the machine-guns, which, in his phrase, played upon them "like a watering pot." He added quite simply, "I wrote my own life off." But the line never wavered.

**W**HEN one man fell another took his place, and, with a final shout, the survivors of the two battalions flung themselves into the wood. The German garrison was completely demoralized, and the impetuous advance of the Canadians did not cease until they reached the far side of the wood and entrenched themselves there in the position so dearly gained. They had, however, the disappointment of finding that the guns had been destroyed by the enemy, and later in the same night a most formidable concentration of

artillery fire, sweeping the wood as a tropical storm sweeps the leaves from the trees of a forest, made it impossible for them to hold the position for which they had sacrificed so much.

Within a few hours of this attack, the 10th Canadian Battalion was again ordered to advance by Lieut.-Colonel Boyle, late a rancher in the neighbourhood of Calgary. The assault was made upon a German trench which was being hastily constructed within two hundred yards of the battalion's right front. Machine-gun and rifle fire opened upon the battalion at the moment the charge began, and Colonel Boyle fell almost instantly with his left thigh pierced in five places. Major MacLaren, his second in command, was also wounded at this time. Battalion stretcher-bearers dressed the colonel's wounds and carried him back to the battalion first-aid station. From there he was moved to Vlamertinghe Field Hospital, and from there again to Poperinghe. He was unconscious when he reached the hospital, and died shortly afterwards without regaining consciousness.

**M**AJOR MACLAREN, already wounded, was killed by a shell while on his way to the hospital. The command of the 10th Battalion passed to Major D. M. Ormond, who was wounded. Major Guthrie, a lawyer from Fredericton, New Brunswick, a member of the local Parliament and a very resolute soldier, then took command of the battalion.

The fighting continued without intermission all through the night of April 22-23, and to those who observed the indications that the attack was being pushed with ever-growing strength, it hardly seemed possible that the Canadians, fighting in positions so difficult to defend and so little the subject of deliberate choice, could maintain their resistance for any long period.



#### HERE MEN WITH THE MAPLE LEAF BADGE FELL

In this chapter Lord Beaverbrook describes the magnificent stand by the Canadians at St. Julien during the second battle of Ypres, a spot where the attack developed with great intensity. One particularly hot corner was the Wielte Road, seen above twenty-three years after the day when shells, machine guns and gas brought death to over two thousand men.

*Photo, William Davis, copyright A.P. Ltd.*

Reinforcements of British troops, commanded by Colonel Geddes, of the Buffs, began to arrive in the gap early on Friday morning. These reinforcements, consisting of three and a half battalions of the 28th Division—drawn from the Buffs, King's Own Royal Leinsters, Middlesex, and York and Lancasters—and other units which joined them from time to time, became known as Geddes' Detachment. The grenadier company of a battalion of the Northumberland Fusiliers, numbering two officers and 120 men, who were on their way to rejoin their division after eight days of trench-fighting at

Hill 60, encountered Colonel Geddes' force and joined it.

Colonel Geddes was killed on the morning of April 28 in tragic circumstances. He had done magnificent work with his composite force, and after five days' terrific fighting received orders to retire. He was just leaving his dug-out, after handing over his command, when a shell ended his career.

At 6 a.m. on Friday, the 2nd Canadian Brigade was still intact, but the 3rd Canadian Brigade, on the left, was bent back upon St. Julien. It became apparent that the left was becoming more and more involved, and a powerful

German attempt to outflank it developed rapidly. The consequences, if it had been broken or outflanked, need not be insisted upon. They would not have been merely local. It was therefore decided, formidable as the attempt undoubtedly was, to try to give relief by a counter-attack upon the first line of German trenches, now far, far advanced from those originally occupied by the French. The attack was carried out at 6.30 a.m. by the 1st (Ontario) Battalion and the 4th Battalion of the 1st Brigade, under Brigadier-General Mercer, acting with Geddes' Detachment. The 4th Battalion was in advance and the 1st in support, under the covering fire of the 1st Canadian Artillery Brigade.

It is safe to say that the youngest private in the ranks, as he set his teeth for the advance, knew the task in front of him, and the youngest subaltern knew all that rested on its success.

It did not seem that any human being could live in the shower of shot and shell which began to play upon the advancing troops.

They suffered terrible casualties. For a short time every other man seemed to fall, but the attack was pressed ever closer and closer. The 4th Canadian Battalion at one moment came under a particularly withering fire.

**For a moment—not more—it wavered. Its most gallant commanding officer, Lieut.-Colonel Birchall, carrying, after an old fashion, a light cane, coolly and cheerfully rallied his men, and at the very moment when his example had infected them, fell dead at the head of his battalion. With a hoarse cry of anger they sprang forward (for, indeed, they loved him) as if to avenge his death.**

The astonishing attack which followed, pushed home in the face of direct frontal fire, made in broad daylight by battalions whose names should live for ever in the memories of soldiers, was carried to the first line of the German trenches. After a hand-to-hand struggle, the last German who resisted was bayoneted, and the trench was won.

**T**HE measure of our success may be taken when it is pointed out that this trench represented, in the German advance, the apex in the breach which the enemy had made in the original line of the Allies, and it was two and a half miles south of that line. This charge, made by men who looked

death indifferently in the face—for no man who took part in it could think he was likely to live—saved, and that was much, the Canadian left. But it did more.

Up to the point where the assailants conquered, or died, it secured and maintained during the most critical moment of all the integrity of the Allied line. For the trench was not only taken—it was held thereafter against all comers, and in the teeth of every conceivable projectile, until the night of Sunday, April 25, when all that remained of the war-broken but victorious battalions was relieved by fresh troops . . . .

It is necessary now to return to the fortunes of the 3rd Brigade, commanded by General Turner, which . . . at five o'clock on Thursday was holding the Canadian left, and after their first attack assumed the defence of the new Canadian salient, at the same time sparing all the men it could to form an extemporised line between the wood and St. Julien.

**This Brigade was also at the first moment of the German offensive made the object of an attack by a discharge of poisonous gas. The discharge was followed by two enemy assaults.**

Although the fumes were extremely poisonous, they were not, perhaps, having regard to the wind, so disabling as on the French lines (which ran almost east to west), and the Brigade, though

affected by the fumes, stoutly beat back the two German assaults. Encouraged by this success, it rose to the supreme effort required by the assault on the wood, which has already been described.

At 4 a.m. on the morning of Friday, the 23rd, a fresh emission of gas was made both on the 2nd Brigade, which held the line running north-east, and on the 3rd Brigade, which, as has been fully explained, had continued the line up to the pivotal point as defined above, and had there spread down in a south-easterly direction.

**T**is perhaps worth mentioning that two privates of the 48th Highlanders, who found their way into the trenches . . . perished in the fumes, and it was noticed that their faces became blue immediately after dissolution. The Royal Highlanders of Montreal, 13th Battalion, and the 48th Highlanders, 15th Battalion, were more especially affected by the discharge. The Royal Highlanders, though considerably shaken, remained immovable on their ground. The 48th Highlanders, who no doubt received a more poisonous discharge, were for the moment dismayed, and, indeed, their trench, according to the testimony of very hardened soldiers, became intolerable.

The battalion retired from the trench, but for a very short distance and for a very short time. In a few moments they were again their own men. They



Imperial War Museum

#### THE FIRST GASSED MEN CAME TO THIS WAREHOUSE

The building seen above at Vlamertinghe was the Field Hospital to which the wounded and gassed Canadians, who had fought so heroically at St. Julien, were removed after they had received preliminary attention at the field dressing-station. From here, Major MacLaren was taken after being mortally wounded in the gallant charge described in page 359. Before war came to Vlamertinghe this building was a hop warehouse and only dire necessity caused it to be used as a hospital.



#### THIRD-CLASS COACHES, BUT FIRST-CLASS MEN

In the first year of the war there were few of the well-equipped hospital trains which later on took the wounded on the first stage of their journey to base hospital or "Blighty." Third-class coaches, none too comfortable at any time, served for the wounded and the gassed, who could still sit up. Here are such men taking a breather and a cup of tea from a Red Cross nurse, during one of the many stops made as the train jolted towards the base.

advanced on and reoccupied the trenches which they had momentarily abandoned.

In the course of the same night the 3rd Brigade, which had already displayed a resource, a gallantry, and a tenacity for which no eulogy could be excessive, was exposed (and with it the whole Allied cause) to a peril still more formidable. Several German divisions were attempting to crush or drive back this devoted Brigade, and in any event to use their enormous numerical superiority to sweep around and overwhelm its left wing. At some point in the line which cannot be precisely determined, the last attempt partially succeeded, and, in the course of this critical struggle, German troops in considerable though not in overwhelming numbers swung past the unsupported left of the Brigade, and, slipping in between the wood and St. Julien, added to the torturing anxieties of the long-drawn struggle by

the appearance, and indeed for the moment the reality, of isolation from the Brigade base.

In the exertions made by the 3rd Brigade during this supreme crisis it is almost impossible to single out one battalion without injustice to others, but though the efforts of the Royal Highlanders of Montreal, 13th Battalion, were only equal to those of the other battalions who did such heroic service, it so happened, by chance, that the fate of some of its officers attracted special attention.

Major Norsworthy was in the reserve trenches, half a mile in the rear of the firing line, when he was killed in his attempt to reach Major McCuaig with reinforcements; and Captain Guy Drummond fell in attempting to rally French troops. This was on the afternoon of the 22nd, and the whole responsibility for coping with the crisis then fell upon the shoulders of Major

McCuaig until he was relieved early on the morning of the 23rd.

All through the afternoon and evening of the 22nd, and all through the night which followed, McCuaig had to meet and grapple with difficulties which might have borne down a far more experienced officer. His communications had been cut by shell fire, and he was, therefore, left to decide for himself whether he should retire or whether he should hold on. He decided to hold on, although he knew that he was without artillery support and could not hope for any until, at the earliest, the morning of the 23rd.

The decision was a very bold one. By all the rules of war McCuaig was a beaten man. But the very fact that he remained appears to have deceived the Germans. They might have overwhelmed him, but they feared the supports, which did not in reality exist. It was not in the enemy's psychology to understand that the sheer and unaided valour of McCuaig and his little force would hold the position.

But with a small and dwindling force he did hold it, until daylight revealed to the enemy the naked deception of the defence.



#### **WHERE POISON GAS FIRST TOOK ITS TOLL**

This impressive war memorial, one of the finest in France or Belgium, stands at St. Julien in the Ypres salient. It commemorates 2,000 Canadian soldiers who died in the first gas attack against which they had no protection. An inscription on it reads, "This column marks the battlefield where 18,000 Canadians on the British left withstood the first gas attack." Particularly moving is the sculpture of the head and shoulders of a Canadian soldier which surmounts the column. His head is bowed and his hands are crossed on the butt of his rifle which tapers away into the column.

*Photo, William Davis, copyright A.P. Ltd.*

# I SAW the AGONY of The FIRST GAS ATTACK

by Anthony R. Hossack

ANTHONY R. HOSSACK joined the Queen Victoria Rifles in 1914 and served on the Western Front from early 1915 until he was wounded in 1917. He was again at the front in February 1918 serving with a Machine-Gun Battalion of the 9th (Scottish) Division. His most vivid recollection of the horrors of war was his experience of the first German gas attack, here most dramatically described



**RIFLEMAN AND MACHINE-GUNNER**

Mr. Hossack continued to fight on the Western Front after the incidents described in this chapter until he was taken prisoner in the battle for Mount Kemmel in April 1918.

IT was Thursday evening, April 22, 1915. In a meadow off the Poperinghe-Ypres road, the men of the Queen Victoria Rifles were taking their ease. We had just fought our first big action in the fight for Hill 60. We had had a gruelling time, and had left many of our comrades on its slopes. We survivors were utterly spent and weary; but we felt in good heart, for only an hour ago we had been personally congratulated by Sir John French, also the Army Commander, General Smith-Dorrien.

Now some of us were stretched out asleep on the grass, others making preparations for a much-needed toilet. Our cooks were preparing a meal, and on our right a squad of Sappers were busily erecting huts in which we were to sleep. Alas, we never used them! As the sun was beginning to sink, this peaceful atmosphere was shattered by the noise of heavy shell-fire coming from the north-west, which increased every minute in volume, while a mile away on our right a 42-cm. shell burst in the heart of the stricken city of Ypres.

As we gazed in the direction of the bombardment, where our line joined the French, six miles away, we could see in the failing light the flash of shrapnel, with here and there the light of a rocket. But more curious than anything was a low cloud of yellow-grey smoke or vapour, and, underlying everything, a dull confused murmuring.

Suddenly down the road from the Yser Canal came a galloping team of horses, the riders goading on their

mounts in a frenzied way; then another and another, till the road became a seething mass with a huge pall of dust over all.

Plainly something terrible was happening. What was it? Officers and staff officers, too, stood gazing at the scene, awestruck and dumbfounded; for in the northerly breeze there came a pungent nauseating smell that tickled the throat and made our eyes smart.

The horses and men were still pouring down the road, two or three men on a horse, I saw, while over the fields streamed mobs of infantry, the dusky warriors of French Africa; away went their rifles, equipment, even their tunics that they might run the faster. One man came stumbling through our lines. An officer of ours held him up with levelled revolver. "What's the matter, you bloody lot of cowards?" says he. The Zouave was frothing at the mouth, his eyes started from their sockets, and he fell writhing at the officer's feet.

"Fall in!" Ah, we expected that cry! And soon we moved across the fields in the direction of the line for about a mile. The battalion is formed into line, and we dig ourselves in.

IT is quite dark now, and water is being brought round, and we hear how the Germans have, by the use of poison gas, driven a French army corps out of the line, creating a huge gap which the Canadians have closed *pro tem.* A cheer goes up at this bald statement, though little we knew at what a cost those gallant souls were holding on.

About midnight we withdrew from our temporary trenches and marched about for the rest of the night, till at dawn we were permitted to snatch what sleep we could under a hedge. About the middle of the morning we were on the move again, to the north, and were soon swinging along through Vlamertinghe. About two miles out of

#### ALWAYS THE FIRST SIGN OF COMING DOOM

Below is the main street of Vlamertinghe as it was soon after the events related by Private Hossack in this chapter. The work of destruction by the enemy guns has begun and, as was usually the case, the tower of the village church was the first mark of the enemy gunners because of its value as an observation post. Like all the villages in the Ypres sector, Vlamertinghe was gradually reduced to utter ruin.

Imperial War Museum





E.N.A

#### THEY CAME FROM DESERT SANDS TO YPRES MUD

The troops of French North Africa fought with extraordinary loyalty and bravery for the Republic of which they were proud to boast themselves citizens. Here are some of the dusky warriors whose élan is described in this chapter. They are Algerian tirailleurs popularly known as "Turcos," men of a fighting race who quickly accustomed themselves to modern warfare under the most exacting conditions.

that town we halted in a field. By this time we had joined up with the remainder of our Brigade, the 13th, and, after a meal had been served, we were ordered to dump our packs and fall in by companies. Here our company commander, Captain Flemming, addressed us. "We are," he said, "tired and weary men who would like to rest; however, there are men more weary than we who need our help. We may not have to do much; we may have to do a great deal. Whatever happens, fight like hell. I shall at any rate." A few moments more—then off we go again towards that incessant bombardment, which seemed to come closer every minute.

The Scottish Borderers led the Brigade, followed by the Royal West Kents, then ourselves—all with bayonets fixed, for we were told to be prepared to meet the Germans anywhere on the road.

WE were now in the area of the ill-fated French Colonial Corps. Ambulances were everywhere, and the village of Brielen, through which we passed, was choked with wounded and gassed men. We were very mystified about this gas, and had no protection whatever against it.

Shortly after passing through Brielen we turned to the left down a road which led to the Canal, along the south side of which ran a steep spoil bank, and as the head of our battalion reached this we halted. We could see nothing of what went on on the other side, but knew by the rattle of musketry that there was something doing. So there was, for when we finally crossed the pontoon we found that the Jocks had met the Germans on the north bank and had bundled them helter-skelter up the slope to Pilckem. This

saved us any dirty work for that day, so we spent the rest of it till midnight in carrying supplies and ammunition to the Jocks and Kents, and afterwards lay in reserve on the canal bank. It froze hard that night, and after the sweating fatigue of carrying boxes of S.A.A. all night we were literally aching with cold. All night there seemed to be a spasmodic bombardment all round the Salient.

#### 'THINGS ARE CRITICAL'

NEXT morning about 12 o'clock the adjutant, Captain Culme-Seymour, was chatting to Captain Flemming a few paces away from where I was lying, when up rushed a breathless dispatch rider and handed him a message, which he read aloud to Flemming. I caught three words, "Things are critical." In about five minutes the colonel had the battalion on the move. We moved off in double file by companies, our company leading; as we did so a big shell burst in the midst of "D" Company, making a fearful mess. We moved on quickly, like a gigantic serpent, with short halts now and then. As we skirted Ypres there was a roar of swift-moving thunder and an enormous shell, which seemed to be falling on top of us, burst a quarter of a mile away, covering us with dirt.

Over meadows and fields green with young crops which would never be harvested, past cows peacefully grazing that had had their last milking, we went, passing curiously unperturbed peasants, who watched us from the farms and cottages.

As we crossed the Roulers road a lone cavalryman came galloping down it, hatless and rolling in the saddle as though drunk. Some wag throws a ribald jest at him. He turns his ashy face towards us, and his saddle it seems is a mass of blood. Above us a Taube appears and, hovering over us, lets fall a cascade of glittering silver-like petals. A few moments more and shells begin to fall about us in quantities, and gaps begin to appear in our snakelike line.

We pass a field battery; it is not firing, as it has nothing to fire, and its commander sits weeping on the trail of one of his useless guns. We quicken our pace, but the shelling gets heavier. It seems to be raining shrapnel. Captain Flemming falls, but struggles to his feet and waves us on with encouraging words. We double across a field, and in a few moments come on to the road again. Here was action indeed, for barely had we reached the road and started to work our way towards St. Julien, than we found ourselves amongst a crowd of Canadians of all regiments jumbled up anyhow, and apparently fighting a desperate rearguard action. They nearly all appeared to be wounded and were firing as hard as they could.

THEN comes an order: "Dig in on the roadside." We all scrambled into the ditch, which, like all Flanders ditches, was full of black, liquid mud, and started to work with entrenching tools—a hopeless job. A woman was bringing jugs of water from a cottage a few yards away; evidently she had just completed her week's washing, for a line of garments fluttered in the garden.

"Dig! Dig for your lives!" shouts an officer. But, dig? How can we? 'Tis balers we need.

A detonation like thunder, and I inhale the filthy fumes of a 5·9 as I cringe against the muddy bank. The German heavies have got the road taped to an inch. Their last shell has pitched on our two M.G. teams, sheltering in the ditch on the other side of the road. They disappear, and all we can hear are groans so terrible they will haunt me for ever. Kennison, their officer, stares dazed, looking at a mass of blood and earth. Another crash and the woman and her cottage and water jars vanish and her pitiful washing hangs in a mocking way from her sagging clothes line. A bunch of telephone wires falls about us. To my bemused brain this is a catastrophe in

itself, and I curse a Canadian sapper beside me for not attempting to mend them. He eyes me vacantly, for he is dead.

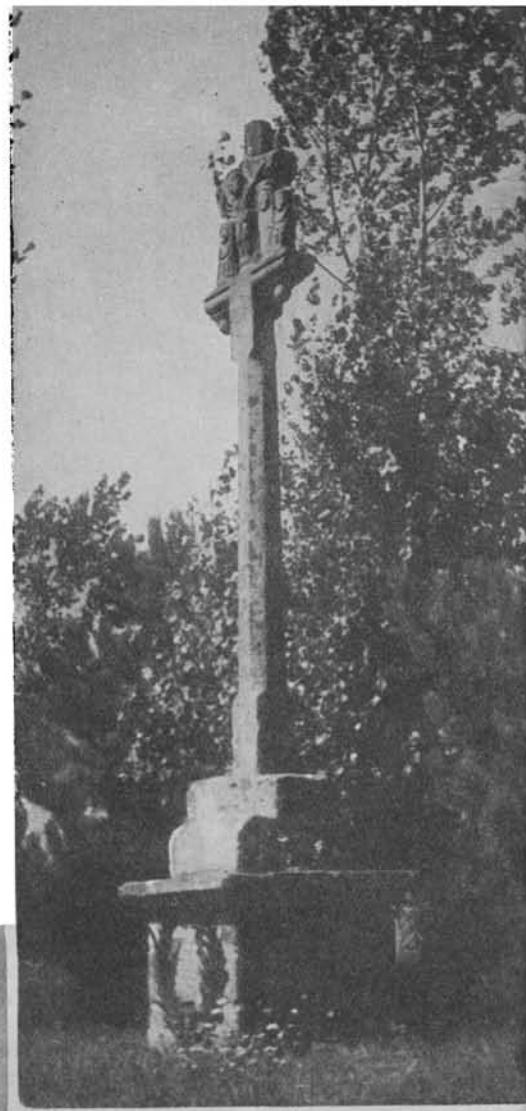
More and more of these huge shells, two of them right in our midst. Shrieks of agony and groans all round me. I am splashed with blood. Surely I am hit, for my head feels as though a battering-ram has struck it. But no, I appear not to be, though all about me are bits of men and ghastly mixtures of khaki and blood.

The road becomes a perfect shambles. For perhaps half a minute a panic ensues, and we start to retire down the road. But not for long. Colonel Shipley stands in the centre of the road, blood streaming down his face. The gallant Flemming lies at his feet, and the adjutant, Culme-Seymour,

#### WHERE GAS AND SHELL KILLED—NATURE'S PEACE NOW REIGNS

The two photographs in this page show scenes where men suffered, endured and met agonizing death in the maelstrom of battle. On the right is the scene of the first gas attack. A Calvary, in the style of those seen in so many villages of Brittany, stands as a memorial to a Breton regiment that suffered heavily here. Below is a scene at Brielen, once one of the hottest spots in the Ypres salient. A British ex-soldier is looking at the spot where he and many of his comrades were first shelled; there corn stocks now stand.

*Photos. William Davis, copyright A.P. Ltd.*





stands in a gateway calmly lighting a cigarette.

"Steady, my lads!" says the colonel. "Steady, the Vics! Remember the regiment." The panic is ended.

"This way," says Seymour. "Follow me through this gate here." As we dash through the gate, I catch a glimpse of our M.O. working in an empty gunpit like a butcher in his shop. Many were the lives he saved that day.

ONCE through the gate we charge madly across a field of young corn. Shrapnel and machine-gun bullets are crackling and hissing everywhere. Ahead of us is a large farm, and advancing upon it at almost right angles to us is a dense mass of German infantry. We are carrying four extra bandoliers of ammunition as well as the rest of our equipment. Shall I ever get there? My limbs ache with fatigue and my legs are like lead. But the inspiring figure of Seymour urges us on, yet even he cannot prevent the thinning of our line or the gaps being torn in it by the German field-gunners, whom we can now plainly see.

At last we reach the farm, and we follow Culme-Seymour round to its farther side. The roar of enemy

machine-guns rises to a crazy shrieking, but we are past caring about them, and with a sob of relief we fall into the farm's encircling trench. Not too soon either, for that grey mass is only a few hundred yards off, and "Rapid fire! Let 'em have it, boys!" and don't we just.

At last a target, and one that we cannot miss. The Germans fall in scores, and their batteries limber up and away. At last we have our revenge for the discomfort of the afternoon. But the enemy re-form and come on again, and we allow them to come a bit nearer, which they do.

We fire till our rifles are almost too hot to hold and the few survivors of our mad quarter of an hour stagger back. The attack has failed, and we have held them, and thank God that we have, for, as our next order tells us, "This line must be held at all costs. Our next is the English Channel."

And hold it we did, through several more big attacks, though the enemy set fire to the farm and nearly roasted us, though our numbers dwindled and we were foodless and sleepless, till, thirty-six hours later, we were relieved in a misty dawn, and crept back through burning Ypres for a few hours' respite.



**FIRST WHIFFS OF DEADLY FUMES**

The first use of gas by the Germans in the Ypres sector on April 22, 1915, was quickly followed by the issue of various types of respirator. Top, left, a soldier is wearing one type of cotton-wool pad with a cotton elastic band to fasten it round his head. In his hands is another type, a mouth-and-nose-piece of double stockinette with plaited worsted loops for the ears. Before poison gas made respirators essential, the acute discomfort arising from the fumes of picric acid used as an explosive in some of the early shells led to the adoption of a rudimentary form of protection. Here men of the R.F.A. in training in 1915 are digging with wet handkerchiefs and special pads over the nose and mouth.



#### THE BRITISH MASKS WERE BETTER

It was inevitable that the Allies should accept Germany's hideous challenge to gas warfare, but the first consignment of gas cylinders was not dispatched to France until July 10, 1915. Here are seen the early preparations against gas made by the German and British Armies. Above are men of the 27th German Infantry Regiment wearing the first respirators (without goggles) issued to them, while below are Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders in the Bois Grenier sector wearing gas masks issued on May 3, 1915. They are slightly different from those illustrated in page 358.





PRESENT AT YPRES

Mr. Stanley Casson was present when "Gas Mask Type I," shown in the photograph in page 368, was issued, and with a "temporary soldier's" eye for the practical he saw its deficiencies.

FROM Vlamertinghe we marched East, and soon night was on us, but night lit by a vivid and lovely moon. In a short time we were in the outskirts of Ypres, a shattered ruin of houses. We halted, formed into single file and began to cross the town. It was a strange and uncanny sight, this corpse of a city that had just died. The smooth cobbled streets and squares were pitted with enormous holes, and great pools of blood lay here and there. Dead horses from scurrying guns and limbers lay in swollen heaps, putrefying the very air itself. The moon made every line clear and stark, and every shadow a patch of sepia. Almost every moment, here or there, a violent flash of orange marked the burst of a shell. The continuous booming of the German guns, which seemed so very near, was broken only at intervals, and those intervals formed shocked silences as eerie as the moonlight.

ONCE or twice a sound like that of an electric train rushing through the air made us pause, fear-struck. An immense explosion and a blinding flash told us that here were the projectiles of the largest gun of all. In one place we threaded our way past a vast crater in the road which was one of the holes made by this famous gun. The night was hot and airless, and we dripped with sweat. Pervading everything was the reeking stench of dead horses and dead men.

Once only did we see a living thing in this murdered city, when a dark ambulance came tearing through the streets picking its way with incredible

# RETREATING on YPRES the DEAD

## And the 'Secret Gun' in the Night

by Stanley Casson

MR. STANLEY CASSON is both one of the most distinguished living archaeologists and a writer of distinction. He served in Flanders with the 1st East Lancashire. His moving description of the difficult days which marked the ending of the second battle of Ypres is a gem of war literature

skill and never pausing for a second, almost as if the furies were pursuing it. At length we emerged from this nightmare land, crossed the old battered moat through what was once the Menin Gate, and we were out in the open country once more. Here at last we were back again in the sort of setting that we knew. But it was grimmer than anything we had seen.

Great streamers of smoke from the smouldering city covered the sky, but away East was the line that we knew, clear to us as on any map, by the long row of constant star-shells. Behind us was the crash of intermittent shells falling on Ypres, in front the crackle of infantry-fire. We paused by the roadside and formed up into column. A few hundreds yards on we had an hour's rest, and most of us slept coldly but solidly in the moonlight by the hedges. At length we moved into a battered row of half-dug trenches that formed a reserve position in the very centre of the Salient, which it was clear enough by now was the spear-head of a defence, and the main objective of attack in a prolonged battle. Here were no quiet times where we and the Germans could snipe and stand-to and sleep and patrol. This was a battle for a purpose, and the only purpose of the Germans must be to break through.

When dawn broke in our battered support trench it was evident enough that we were all in the hollow of a great bowl, with the Germans sitting on the rim and shooting at us.

WE spent three days here continuously on the alert, for we had orders to stand by to be sent in support in any direction. Our little battalion was serving the purpose of reserve for a whole Army Corps, for we were short of men and the line was thinly held. But we had a superb view of the long line of battle. In effect it was an isosceles triangle, which was being attacked along the whole

length of its long sides. The short base was Ypres itself. At night we could see the flares and star-shells running almost all round us. The main road, along which all the traffic of reinforcements and supply went, bisected the base of the triangle and ended at this point. Some cynic remarked, truly enough, that if you walked from Ypres along this road you could be hit from almost every possible angle except from directly behind, so that the only invulnerable part of your body would be a long thin line down the spine. . . .

WE were on a small eminence, and away towards the village of St. Julien we could look down over our own and the German lines. Just about sunset on a calm evening I was looking in this direction when slowly the long brown line of trenches and earth began to change to a dull luminous green.

Looking intently I saw great clouds of greenish yellow vapour creeping across from the German lines, and all clearly issuing from one or two fixed points. We had heard talk of gas, and we had once or twice detected the smell of strange chemical odours, but here was a gas attack, a mile away, which I could see in action with my own eyes.

It was, in fact, one of the last attempts of the Germans to use chlorine, and, like its predecessors, which had occurred before we moved up, it failed.

Our seniors were alarmed and waited for advice, for they saw that at any moment we might be called upon to deal with a situation that neither they nor we had ever been trained to meet. Unexpectedly help came. A parcel was delivered for each company labelled, "Gas Masks Type I." Unpacked, the parcel revealed bundles of small squares of blue flannel, just large enough to cover the mouth, with a tape on each side to tie round behind the head. Whatever benign personage contrived these amiable death-traps I do not know. But

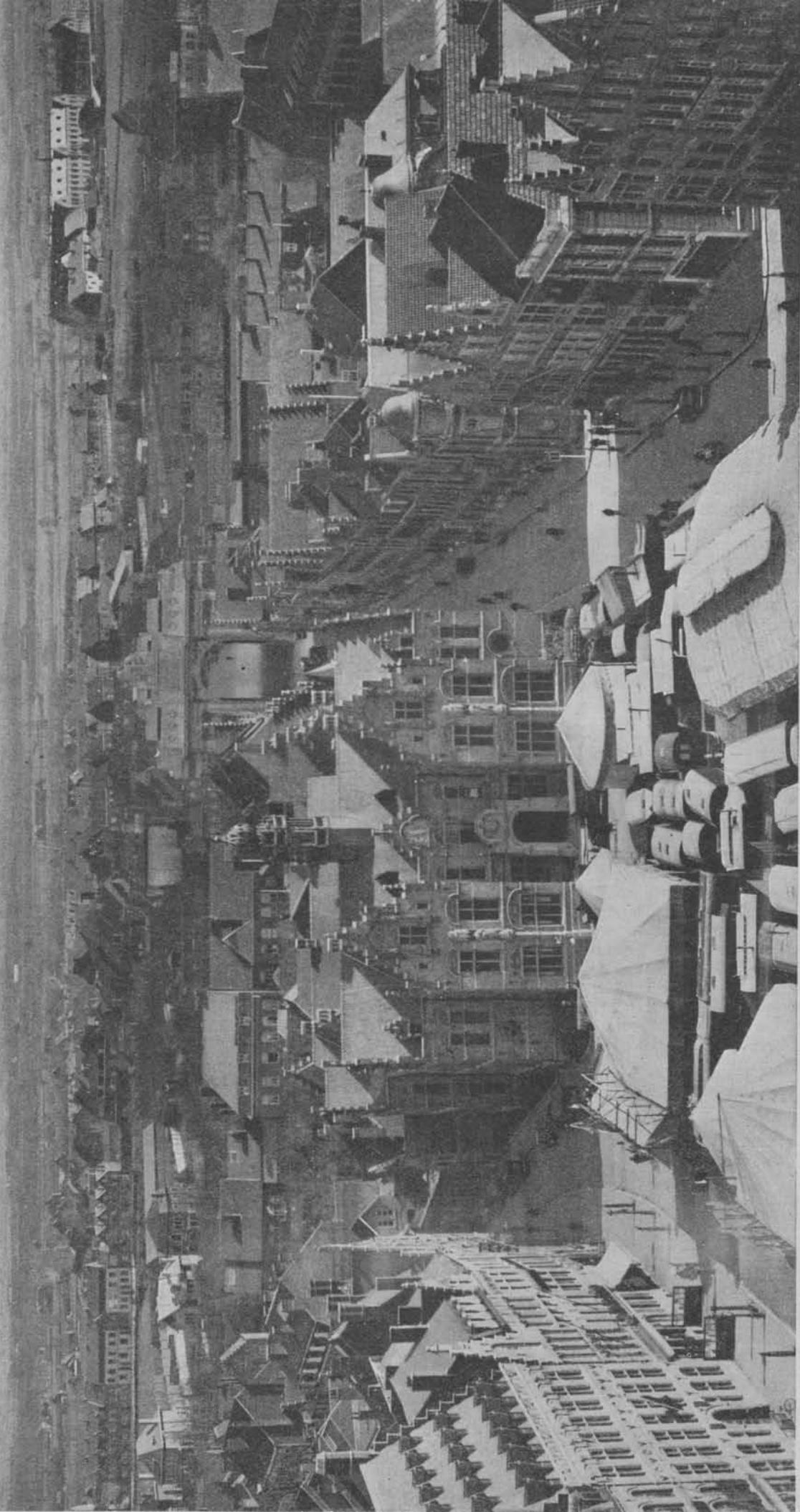


Photo. A. J. Inall, copyright A.P. Ltd.

**WAR'S SHADOW CAN NEVER QUITE BE LIFTED FROM YPRES**

This photograph of Ypres shows the town as it is today basking in the summer sunlight. Reference to the photograph in pages 196-97 of the first British troops entering the town shows how completely the ancient buildings have been reconstructed, but everywhere reminders, small or great, of war can be found. In the square a fair was being held when this photograph was taken from the belfry of the Cloth Hall by special permission of the Clerk of Works to the town. Opposite is the Hospice Notre Dame (Tribunal) and just above it to the right is the Menin Gate. On the horizon may be seen a considerable section of the Salient with Zonnebeke in the centre.

anything more futile could never have been devised by the simplicity of man. On the whole we preferred to resort to the face-towels dipped in our own urine, which an earlier order had suggested would be a temporary palliative.

Nor was our confidence restored a day later by the arrival of "Gas Masks, Type II," which was to replace the first. On unpacking my particular bundle I found that the new masks consisted of large pieces of hairy Harris tweed about three feet long and one in width, again with tapes nattily fixed to the sides. With much laughter the men tried to don their new masks. But at the bottom of the parcel I found a small printed label briefly entitled "Body BELTS." So without further inquiries I ordered my men to put them to whatever use seemed best to them. To a man they placed them round their long-suffering stomachs . . .

But local genius did more. The authorities on the spot, with incredible and commendable speed, bought up hundreds of vine-growers' sprays. These we had for use in the trenches, filled with chemicals to neutralize chlorine.

At last our time for action came. On

the final day in our trenches the fire along the line became intense. As we waited and watched, suddenly over the sky-line ahead of us ran two distraught figures. They flopped into our trenches exhausted, without rifles or equipment. "We are the last of the Buffs, sir," cried one. "The Germans attacked and the regiment is wiped out."

I GAVE them some rum and found them rifles and equipment, comforted them and told them to get ready for more fighting. A moment later a signaller came running madly down to us: "The Germans are coming over in their thousands, sir," he said, panting. "They have broken through." We all got ready, fixed our bayonets and looked martial, when a group of four more men came tumbling over. "We are the last of the Buffs, sir," they cried. This was too much for my witty Lancashiremen, and we all roared with laughter. "Come and meet some of your friends," I said, and took them along to the first pair. They began to look foolish and then they also laughed. Indeed, we all enjoyed ourselves quite a lot. And of Germans "in their thousands" there



#### SCENES IN THE GHASTLY STORY OF GAS

The first respirators issued soon proved ineffective against gas. Right is one of the early types of gas helmet. It was made gas-proof by tucking the lower part of the impregnated cloth of which it consisted inside the tunic. This man is carrying as a souvenir a kukri, the knife used by Gurkhas in hand-to-hand fighting. The pathetic figure below is a seriously gassed man being given oxygen at the Northern Field Ambulance at Hazebrouck in June 1915.

Photos, Press Topics and Imperial War Museum





#### PEACE—RUIN—RESTORATION

At the close of the events which Mr. Casson describes in this chapter, he and his men reached at last the village of Elverdinge, a haven of rest after the storm of the Ypres salient. Through the village street they marched to find refuge at last beneath the trees of the Château. Ruin came to both village and Château, but restoration was achieved by the indomitable spirit of the Belgian people. The top photograph shows the Château as it is now, rebuilt amongst the trees, while immediately above is the village street restored with the bricks of 1915.

*Photos, William Davis. copyright A.P. Ltd.*

was no trace. Actually a small trench had been lost to the enemy and these men had managed to get away. But it was a lesson in how a stampede starts. For the line was as strong as a rock and there was no general attack. I kept the men with me, and in half an hour they were as ready as the rest to move up again when wanted. The dramatic touch amused me. I suppose the title of "Buff's" leads to clichés. The men had done too much reading of the newspapers in quiet trenches. They could hardly help coining the phrase, for in their ears it must have sounded heroic. There was something distinguished in being "the last of the Buffs," but the distinction was becoming too popular, and their sense of humour saved them at last.

**B**UT the battle was being pressed in earnest and the position in the Salient had become impossible, for the long triangle was being whittled down to a thinness almost impossible for habitation. It is one thing to hold the front against the enemy but another to be shot in the back from the enemy on the other side of the triangle—and that was

what was happening. Our trenches in some places could be fired at from behind by German artillery south of Ypres. The Higher Command took a wise decision. We were told that day that the Salient was to be abandoned, except for a stump that was to be held around the city of Ypres. The great spearhead was to be cut off. Our part was to go up at night to the trenches and man them while their occupants withdrew. We were to stay there an hour or so and then leave ourselves, selecting a score of men and officers to stay behind and fire at intervals to disguise the fact that the trenches were abandoned. These in turn were to depart at dawn and find their way back. . . .

We formed up at dusk, and marched over broken ground into trenches that led us to a sloping hill with the vague outlines of trees near it. As we neared, silence was ordered and, unexpectedly, we found ourselves filling a trench that was already crammed with those whom we relieved.

**B**ut they were battered and broken, and, as we filled up the narrow trench that we were to occupy for barely a few hours, we could not help treading as we went on wounded and dying men. To this day I shall remember those cries of the wounded as they begged us not to leave them behind when we went. As I turned a bend I trod unwittingly on a figure heaped up in a shadow. He cried out in agony.

**I** COULD think of nothing that could conceivably be said to him, for in such a case there is nothing to say. And I had to press on, for the Germans were hardly seventy yards away, and such was the confusion of the relief that, had they turned machine-guns on the trenches, we should have been shot like rabbits.

It was a matter of life and death to us all, and the wounded had to give way to the prime consideration of the whole and the living. We did indeed attempt to get back all the wounded we could, but any hint to the Germans that we were abandoning the Salient, and a storm of artillery would have torn up the roads and caught us all in the open.

There was no moon yet, and we finally took up our fire-stations in the trench, firing actively, so as to give no hint of the coming retreat. In due course our orders came, and all but the percentage of officers and men who were to be left behind as a skeleton garrison moved out into the open ground behind the trenches and formed up into column. There was a deathly silence from the German side, and at any moment we expected attack, or at least to be swept by rifle fire and guns. But nothing happened, and, strung up to the highest

tension, we marched off towards the spinal road of the Salient that would take us back behind the new lines which, we were told, were already held and manned, ready for the German advance which would take place on the morrow.

We reached the road simultaneously with other columns and a pack of men, here and there ten abreast, units confused, companies mixed, and officers searching for their men like lost spirits, filled up the whole surface. At intervals ambulances, packed beyond their capacity, pushed doggedly through the moving column. And over all was a soft and velvety darkness.

There was, indeed, confusion, and yet it took but little trouble when at last we crossed the canal at Ypres to get ourselves sorted out. I knew my destination, and at a point about a mile from where we started I moved my small platoon across open country with the aid of a night compass. I had never done this before except in barrack squares and had never dreamed that it would ever come in handy. . . .

We had a long and rough march. For the first night, as if by some providence, the Germans neglected to shell the roads.

It was the one night when their harvest would have been a rich one. At last we came to the canal and the outskirts of battered Ypres. We passed through the new lines and heard the cheerful shouts of those who were manning it, and were waiting for the dawn when they would be able to pick off Germans as they advanced to the new position. We shouted back, bandied a joke or two and went on. Belgians near the canal waved to us, and at last we reached the village of Elverdinghe. Dawn was now well up and, as the sun rose, we filed into the delightful garden of an old castle, with an ornamental lake. But it was raining hard and we found shelter under trees and hedges.

**F**OOD appeared in due course, but the Germans were shelling every thicket and every copse, and it was not long before we were moved off to shelter farther back in a wood. There we had a magnificent rest, sprawling in the sun, washing in streams and resting to our hearts' content. Fragments of the armies of our allies appeared among the trees—Moroccans with high turbans, French cuirassiers with brass helmets like

London firemen, and coloured Zouaves, The men foregathered with all alike, talking unaffectedly in the lingua franca of the Low Countries that all Englishmen have always talked when fighting in Flanders.

That night I slept the solid sleep of the healthily exhausted . . . At breakfast I heard some of the men of the transport column telling a strange tale of a secret gun in the woods near by, said to be kept underground, and fired at night by Germans disguised as Belgian peasants. I never found out the origin of the story, but it was firmly believed. It was asserted that the gun was used to fire upon our own guns from behind, and that the Germans had been deliberately left behind there for that purpose after the original German withdrawal of some months before.

That night we did in fact hear every now and then the whistle of a shell from a gun near the suspect wood, and it sounded unlike the whistle of our own shells. This was good enough evidence for the men, and they all agreed that there was the secret gun in action. I have often wondered about the origin of that story.

\* 71 May 7, 1915

## I WENT DOWN With the LUSITANIA

by Viscountess Rhondda

*Of all the German barbarities, the iniquitous sinking of the Lusitania by a German submarine is probably the one which will remain the most indelibly engraved on human memory. In that criminal disaster 1,198 men, women and children met their death by drowning. No account could conjure up for us more vividly the nightmare experience of the passengers on that ill-fated ship than does this thrilling narrative by Viscountess Rhondda, who was among the fortunate survivors*



### SAVED FROM THE SEA

After the amazing adventures described in this chapter, Viscountess Rhondda, who on her father's death succeeded to the title, did valuable war service as Commissioner of Women's National Service in Wales and Chief Controller of Women's Recruiting

who were not due on board till about ten o'clock, had still time after reading the warning, unmistakable in form and position [see illustration in next page], to cancel their passage if they chose.

For the third-class passengers it came too late. As a matter of fact, I believe that no British and scarcely any American passengers acted on the warning, but we were most of us very fully conscious of the risk we were running. A number of people wrote farewell letters to their home folk and posted them in New York to follow on another vessel.

We were due to arrive in Liverpool on Saturday, May 8, and we had all imagined that the attempts would be made in the Irish Sea during our last night. We were wrong. On the Friday

afternoon, at about two o'clock, we were off the south-west coast of Ireland, the Old Head of Kinsale was visible in the distance; my father and I had just come out of the dining-room after lunching and were strolling into the lift on "D" deck. "I think we might stay up on deck tonight to see if we get our thrill," he said. I had no time to answer.

*There was a dull, thud-like, not very loud but unmistakable explosion.*

It seemed to come from a little below us and about the middle of the vessel on the port side, that was the side towards the land. I turned and came out of the lift; somehow, the stairs seemed safer. My father walked over to look out of a porthole. I did not

**O**n Saturday, May 1 (the day on which the Lusitania was to sail), in order that there might be no mistake as to German intentions, the German Embassy at Washington issued a warning to passengers couched in general terms, which was printed in the New York morning papers directly under the notice of the sailing of the Lusitania. The first-class passengers,

wait. I had days before made up my mind that if anything happened one's instinct would be to make straight for the boat-deck (it is a horrible feeling to stay under cover even for a few moments in a boat that may be sinking), but that one must control that and go straight to one's cabin to fetch one's life-belt and then on to the boat-deck. As I ran up the stairs, the boat was already heeling over. As I ran, I thought, "I wonder I'm not more frightened," and then, "I'm beginning to get frightened, but I mustn't let myself."

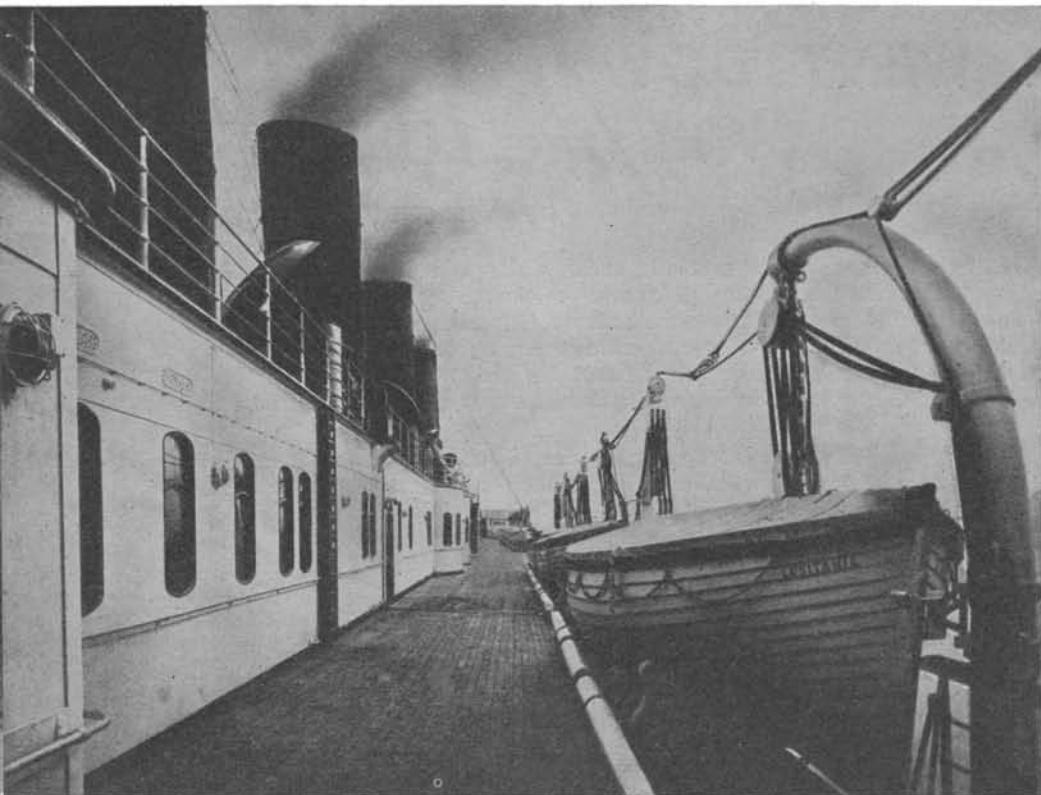
I COLLECTED my life-belt, the "Boddy" belt provided by the Cunard Company. On my way back I ran into my father's cabin and took out one of his belts, fearing that he might be occupied with his papers and forget to fetch one for himself. Then I went up on to "A" deck (the boat-deck). Here there was, of course, a choice of sides. I chose the starboard side, feeling that it would somehow be safer to be as far away from the submarine as possible. The side farther from the submarine was also the higher out of the water, as the boat had listed over towards the side

on which she had been hit and the deck was now slanting at a considerable angle; and to be as high as possible out of the water felt safer, too.

As I came out into the sunlight, I saw standing together the American doctor, Dr. F—, and his sister-in-law, Miss C—. I asked if I might stay beside them until I caught sight of my father, which I made sure of doing soon. I put on my own life-belt and held the other in my hand.

Just after I reached the deck a stream of steerage passengers came rushing up from below and fought their way into the boat nearest to us, which was being lowered. They were white-faced and terrified; I think they were shrieking. There was no kind of order—the strongest got there first, the weak were pushed aside.

HERE and there a man had his arm round a woman's waist and bore her along with him; but there were no children to be seen; no children could have lived in that throng. They rushed a boat before it was ready for them. A ship's officer made some feeble attempt to prevent them, but there was no real attempt at order or



THE PIRATES SAID 'YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED'

Above, right, is the historic notice inserted with obvious intent in American newspapers beneath the Cunard Company's advertisement of the sailing of the Lusitania on her last tragic voyage. On the slender plea that all passengers had been warned by this notice and should not have sailed, Germany based her excuses for the greatest crime of the sea. The larger photograph is of the liner's boat deck on which the moving scenes described by Viscountess Rhondda in this chapter took place.

REPORTS  
OCEAN LINERS  
**CUNARD**  
EUROPE VIA LIVERPOOL  
**LUSITANIA**  
Fastest and Largest Steamer  
now in Atlantic Service Sails  
SATURDAY, MAY 1, 10 A.M.  
Transylvania, Fri., May 7, 5 P.M.  
Oriana, - - Tues., May 18, 10 A.M.  
Tuscania, - - Fri., May 21, 5 P.M.  
LUSITANIA, Sat., May 29, 10 A.M.  
Transylvania, Fri., June 4, 5 P.M.  
Gibraltar—Genoa—Naples—Piraeus  
S.S. Carpathia, Thur., May 13, Noon  
ROUND THE WORLD TOURS  
Through bookings to all continental Ports  
and to Australia and the Far East.  
Cunard's Office, 21-24 State St., N. Y.  
  
**NOTICE!**  
TRAVELLERS intending to  
embark on the Atlantic voyage  
are reminded that a state of  
war exists between Germany  
and her allies and Great Britain  
and her allies; that the zone of  
war includes the waters adja-  
cent to the British Isles; that  
in accordance with formal no-  
tices given by the Imperial Ger-  
man Government, vessels flying  
the flag of Great Britain, or of  
any of her allies, are liable to  
destruction in those waters and  
that travellers sailing in the  
war zone on ships of Great  
Britain or her allies do so at  
their own risk.  
  
**IMPERIAL GERMAN EMBASSY**  
WASHINGTON, D. C., APRIL 22, 1915.

discipline. As we watched, I turned to the American girl. "I always thought a shipwreck was a well-organized affair." "So did I," said she, "but I've learnt a devil of a lot in the last five minutes."

Two seamen began to lower the boat, which was full to overflowing, but no one was in command of them. One man lowered his end quickly, the other lowered his end slowly; the boat was in an almost perpendicular position when it reached the water. Half the people fell out, but the boat did not capsize, and I think most of them scrambled back afterwards. I do not know. We turned away and did not look. It was not safe to look at horrible things just then. Curious that it never for a moment struck any of us as possible to attempt to get into the boat ourselves. Even at that moment death would have seemed better than to make part of that terror-infected crowd. I remember regretfully thinking something of this sort.

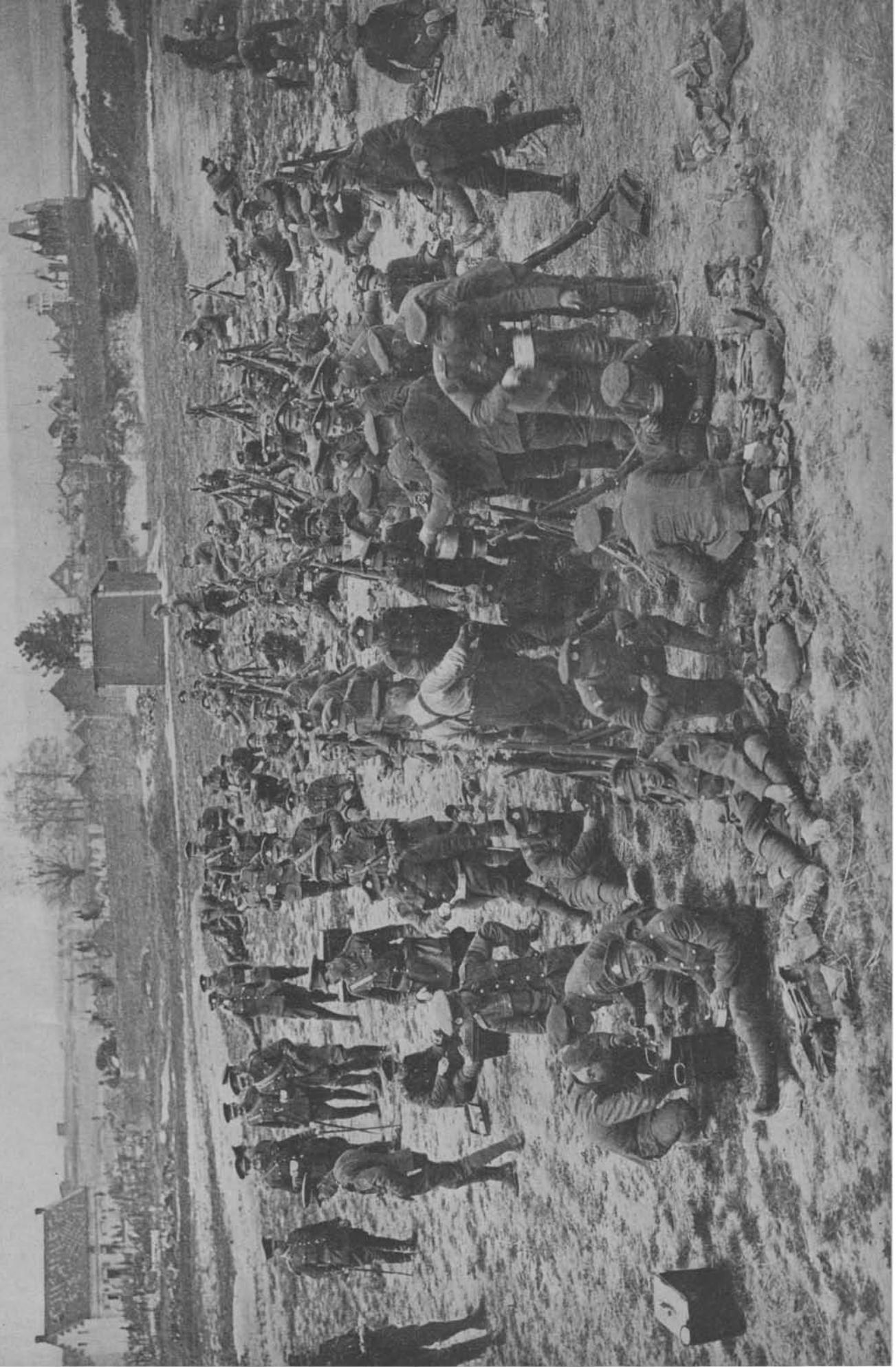


**THREE MEN WHO FOUGHT FIFTY—AND LIVED!**

These three Highlanders were the heroes of an extraordinary incident which went to show that resolute men could often face fearful odds and win a victory by a gallant resistance. Escorting a British convoy near La Bassée in April 1915, they were attacked by a German patrol fifty strong. During a short but sharp fight these three Highland heroes beat off the patrol and sent it away in headlong flight, leaving seventeen men dead behind them.

**FROM THE WESTERN WORLD TO THE WESTERN FRONT**

The first Canadian Contingent of 33,000 men arrived in England in the autumn of 1914, and the first regiment went to Flanders in December of that year. In the early months of 1915 the remainder of the Contingent went overseas. Here men of a Canadian regiment on the march have bivouacked for their midday meal near a village in the war zone. Canadian battalions bore on their caps the famous maple leaf badge, their units being indicated only by the shoulder badges. In Chapter 68, Lord Beaverbrook describes how magnificently they acquitted themselves.



## Leaves from the Editor's Note-Book

(Continued from page ii of this wrapper)

articles are written by the men on the spot." He, in common with two or three other writers, appreciates Captain Gyde's chapter on the action near Maroilles, and his letter is of such great interest to all Old Contemptibles that I quote part of it :

"The article by Captain Gyde is, in my opinion, a masterpiece of realistic writing. He describes events as they happened so clearly and vividly that everything of those memorable days comes back as clear as if it happened yesterday. The battle of Le Cateau was a rather tough time for my battalion, too. We dug ourselves in, and were nicely holding our own, when the order to retire came along. I well remember the grousing it caused. We, the rank and file, could not understand then why we should have to 'run away from those square-headed ! ! ! ! when we could have held them there for ever. I quote that remark of a pal of mine. Fortunately we did not know the general situation, only what was happening in our immediate vicinity. We were under the impression then that we were the decoys being used to lure the German Army towards Paris, where the French Army were waiting to annihilate them. Our military tacticians (*sic*) had great ideas in those days—the ones in the ranks I mean. Anyway, I will say that our chaps, or at least those with whom I came into contact, were never at any time dispirited. Tired and weary, yes, but always holding tight to the impression that we had the Germans beaten any old time we wanted. And events proved right—even if it did take four years to do it."

**F**Ollowing almost immediately on this letter, I received another one from an ex-sergeant of the Royal Fusiliers, who, while he congratulates me "for a splendid job of work," raises the question of the authenticity of the very photograph of Mr. Carter as "the young sentry at Mons." He has discussed it with some other old comrades and asks whether—since the photograph shows the sentry carrying an officer's haversack, and a leather rifle sling, and the absence of a bayonet sheath and entrenching tool handle—it is not a composite photograph taken at a later period of the war. So hard, then, is the Editorial lot! Having discovered by a personal visit to the Museum at Mons this remarkable and undoubtedly unique photograph of what was probably the first sentry posted at Mons, taken on August 22, 1914—and this date is specifically stated underneath the photograph with the precise hour at which it was taken—I am faced with the definite suggestion that the photograph is a fake. I am sure the questions are raised in all good faith; but, on the other hand, it is a little exasperating that in a work of this nature, where every word of the text and every photograph is characterized by the spirit and principle "I was there," they should be raised at all.

**I** AM sure my readers are quite satisfied that, as I have assured my correspondent with every emphasis that I can contrive, no photograph appears in this new work that is anything but perfectly genuine and unaltered. The illustration of our work is confined, with the rarest possible exceptions, to actual contemporary photographs taken at the time and place of the incidents described beneath them and presented without any of the so-called artistic "improvements."

**P**ossibilities of error in a work of this sort are more than merely numerous. It positively bristles with names of persons and places, times and dates, titles of battalions, brigades and divisions in a four years' war which, although largely static over its central period of trench warfare, necessarily involved multifarious movements of units and individuals. We have so far proceeded but a short distance on our way through the four years, yet we have already en-

countered many thousands of facts and statements which have had to be checked and re-checked with the utmost care. For if there is one thing that the ex-service man does pride himself upon, it is that he knows to what brigade and division his unit belonged, who commanded it, and where it was at various times. He is the man on the spot, whereas editorially we have to depend upon official histories, records, photographs and other documents, and only too often do we find that statements made in them conflict or are sometimes even impossible, so that I am always prepared to accept corrections if they prove to be necessary, much as I may regret that necessity. Mr. A. Dickinson, of Bletchley, Bucks, in a long and very interesting letter, corrects the statement made on page 91 that Major-Gen. C. C. Monro commanded the First Division, whereas in fact he was in command of the Second Division.

**M** R. DICKINSON was then a corporal in the Second Division Signal Company, and kept a diary of events with which he was in close contact. He says :

"On many occasions, being on a field telephone exchange or telephones, a great deal of information came my way during this period—for instance, during the Loos attack, I could hear when our gas was to be liberated, progress made, instructions given from Div. to Bdes.

"It was interesting to me on seeing the picture of Col. Percival (who I believe commanded the 2nd Div. artillery) as he once took every mounted man out of my cable section, leaving the wagons on the roadside, to defend a bridge about 2 miles west of Soissons crossing the Aisne.

"This happened at about 4.30 p.m. on Aug 31st, and as the cavalry patrols had been driven in, we were ordered to hold it till 6 p.m., but were relieved by a platoon of K.R.Rs., under the command of Prince Maurice of Battenburgh.

"It was amusing to see the drivers galloping across the field on their draught horses with half sets of harness clanging. It seems an incredible time ago since those days, but I am still serving as N.C.O. 1/4 Signals in the 393rd (RBY) Field Battery and have also two sons serving in the same unit.

Mr. Dickinson is another of my correspondents who has taken a special pleasure in Captain Gyde's brilliant description of the action at Maroilles.

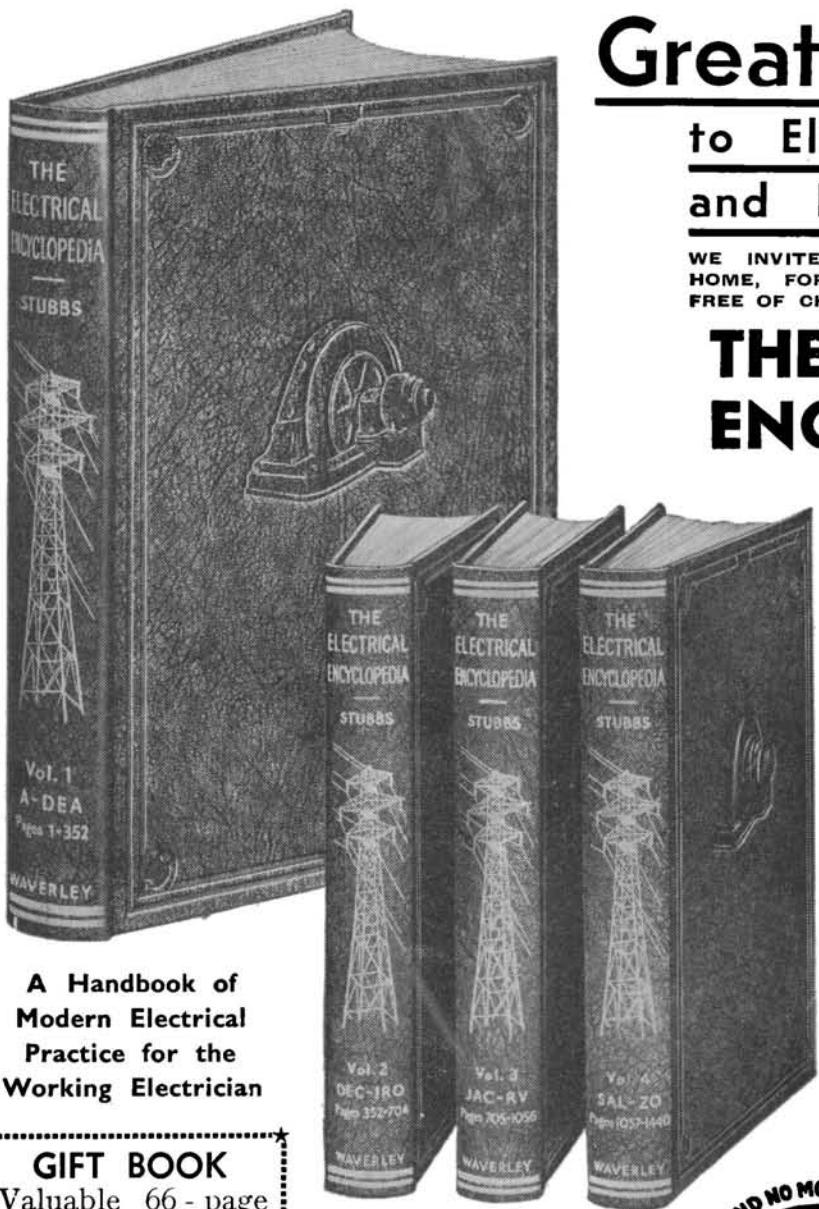
**I**NCIDENTALLY, it has given me very great pleasure to find how many of the readers of my new work treasure its predecessor. One of many, Mr. C. S. Launchbury of Oxford, says :

"Having just perused Part 2 of THE GREAT WAR: I WAS THERE, may I offer you my congratulations in giving us ex-service men a book which I feel sure must appeal to all ranks, giving us as it does pen pictures from all ranks of their experiences of those four years.

"I was a reader of *World War: a Pictured History* and thought this was the best war book up to date, but I must agree with you that I WAS THERE is your best.

He is indeed one of many, for I can count by the dozen the letters in the last ten days that make references of a similar nature to the joy of possession of *World War*.

**A**s a "stop-press" note I can just include a request by Mr. James Dilley, ex-sergeant of the R.A.S.C., concerning the upper photograph in page 101 of Part 3. He recognizes the two A.S.C. men but cannot now remember their names, and if anyone else also knows them he will be, as I shall be myself, very glad if they will write to me. One was in the A.A.G. office, Line of Communications H.Q., and the other in the A.Q.M.G. branch.



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